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ABSTRACT

This book discusses personal safety issues of concern to teachers, offers common sense rules, and provides information about crime and violence. Chapter 1, "Recognizing the Problem," discusses characteristics of violent schools, myths about school crime, teachers' right to know, denial and under-reporting, and discovering problem sources. Chapter 2, "Preparing for the Inevitable: How Teachers Can Help," covers crisis management, planning, school and classroom discipline, and other schoolwide considerations. Chapter 3, "Ongoing Safety Efforts: What Teachers Can Suggest," covers elements of crime, technology, school policies, school board mandates, and professional assistance. Chapter 4, "The Troublemakers: What Teachers Need to Know," covers gangs, substance abusers, ritualistic groups, and vigilantes. Chapter 5, "Teachers' Liability and Rights," looks at risk of lawsuits and rights to pursue litigation. Chapter 6, "Avoiding Your Own Victimization," includes victim profiles, personal security programs, four stages of every crime, and other details. Chapter 7, "Becoming a Successful Victim," treats rape avoidance, robbery, and larceny. Chapter 8, "Emotional Survival," addresses decompression after a crime, coping with stress, and building a support system. Contains 41 references. (JB)

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SURVIVAL SKILLS FOR TEACHERS SERIES

Staying Safe at School

Chester L. Quarles

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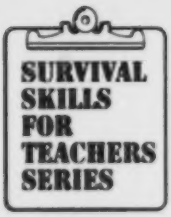

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Preface

Are you concerned about violence and disruptive behavior at your school? Chances are that you wouldn't even be glancing through this book if you weren't. If you want to avoid becoming a crime victim, and if you want to create a safe environment for your students, please read on. You will discover safety and security alternatives that may forever enhance the quality of your life at school.

Staying Safe at School targets personal safety issues of concern to at-risk teachers all over the world. It presents some commonsense rules, but it also helps you learn about crime and violence. Learn to analyze your school environment for security risks—and lower your risks. Learn about the troublemakers—and prevent trouble. Learn what to do in a crisis—and what *not* to do. Learn to plan ahead—but if the worst occurs and you become a crime victim, learn how to survive. Among other things, this book shows you how to become a survivor.

When you are safer, so are your students and all other school personnel. Schools are supposed to be safe. By taking up the proactive recommendations presented in these pages, you can protect yourself and make a difference to others.

CHESTER L. QUARLES

About the Author

Chester L. Quarles, Ph.D., is a Professor and the Director of the Criminal Justice Programs of the University of Mississippi. He previously has served as a Military Policeman (U.S. Army), as a Security Officer in contractual firms, and as owner and manager of a 100-person security operation. He also has served as a Criminal Investigator for the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, as the Director of the Mississippi Crime Laboratory, and as the Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics.

Quarles is a specialist in the development of safe neighborhoods and is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Certified Consultant in environmental redesign programs. He also works extensively with schools and teachers in developing safer working environs.

He is now the Director of the Terrorism Trend Analysis Institute at the University of Mississippi and the Project Manager for SAFE (Security Assessments Forecasting and Education), a database, electronic bulletin board, and analysis center operated for mission, humanitarian, and relief organizations operating throughout the world.

Quarles has written some 17 crime prevention articles and has published a total of 44 articles, two coauthored books, and a school

teacher "Survival" monograph for the National Education Association. His book *Terrorism: Avoidance and Survival* was published in 1991. He also serves as an Associate Editor for the *Security Journal, The Journal of Security Administration,* and the *American Journal of Criminal Justice.*

Introduction: Recognizing the Problem

When you became a teacher, safety and security issues were probably the last things on your mind. Schools were as safe as any institution could be. However, as violence began to occur in schools, you probably became concerned about your own safety. Then, as school violence increased or when an associate was attacked, you became even more apprehensive. Today you probably are afraid. You may even be absolutely terrified.

The truth is that thousands of teachers are afraid. Afraid to go to work. Afraid to teach. Afraid for themselves. Afraid for their students. Stressed out and in need of help.

What do you do in the midst of violence, disruption, and adversity? What do you do when gangs flourish and drugs are prevalent? The first thing you need to do is recognize that there is a problem. School violence is widespread—it is present in rural as well as urban settings. Merely recognizing the existence and extent of the problem, however, can lead to fear. And fear can imprison you as surely as the highest walls of a state penitentiary.

Facts About Violence

Knowledge can help disperse fear, so knowing some of the facts is very important. One primary fact is that adolescence is the most dangerous stage of life. Juveniles commit approximately one third of all Uniform Index Crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, arson, murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault).

Homicide is the leading killer of Black adolescents and young adults, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. During adolescence, homicide rates increase 15 times between the ages of 10 and 20. The National Center for Health Statistics list homicide as the second leading cause of death among all youth aged 15 to 24.

In their book *Wide Awake: A Guide to Safe Campus Living in the 90s*, M. C. Smith and M. D. Smith report that students commit most campus crime. 40% of all the robberies and 36% of all the assaults on teenagers occur at school. For children between the ages of 12 and 15, this rate is even higher. Burglary rates at schools are five times the burglary rates of businesses.

Kids are carrying guns to school every day. A 1991 Children's Defense Fund study estimated that over 135,000 U.S. children bring guns to school every day. The Center for Disease Control in Atlanta discovered that violence is the major cause of deaths for all young people in the United States. In their 1993 *Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, these researchers estimated that approximately 8% of all teenagers brought guns to school sometime during the last 30 days. The 1987 *National Adolescent Student Health Survey* estimated that on any given day, more than 100,000 students carry guns to school.

In another survey commissioned by Camp Fire Boys and Girls, some 53% of the respondents believed their schools have problems with students carrying weapons. Of 13- to 19-year-olds, 20% reported witnessing confrontations in school with a knife; 7% said they had seen an encounter involving a gun; 83% of those surveyed had witnessed fistfights; and 55% had seen students destroying school property.

You didn't need to read these facts to know that many American schools have problems. All you need is to read the front page of

your local newspaper. Just within the space of a few months, newspapers recently printed the following headlines:

- Rally Set to Honor Slain Wife, Teacher
- Man Sentenced in School Rapes, Kidnappings
- Violence at Prep Games Could Mean Daytime Action
- Kids Ask for Help With Urban Violence
- School Board Weighs Arming School Guards
- Educator Kidnapped
- Danger: School Zone
- School Violence: Teachers Caught in Struggle

School violence is a universal phenomenon, in both the developed and third-world countries. New York, Los Angeles, and other large school systems actually have teacher counseling programs to help teacher victims overcome their emotional trauma and get back to the classroom. And systems all over America pay for counseling aid on an as-needed basis when their teachers are attacked.

Although I support counseling for those who need it, I also believe that more secure schools would lower the need for these counseling programs. And we *can* lower crime in the school. We can reduce attacks against teachers through crime prevention, deterrence, and elimination programs.

A United Federation of Teachers study recently indicated an escalating fear on the part of teachers. The fear was based on the increase of violence, drug trafficking, and weapons. Whether the fear of crime is high in your school or not, you still must accept the premise that any violence at school is unacceptable (Muir, 1989).

Characteristics of Violent Schools

In 1985, the National School Boards Association noted the following characteristics of schools where teachers report the highest levels of student victimization:

- Urban areas
- Poverty-stricken areas
- Areas of high unemployment

- High crime neighborhoods
- Many students testing as low, in terms of their ability
- High welfare recipient percentage
- A high daily average absentee record

Both students and teachers experience higher victimization in schools where the following conditions are found:

- High proportions of students are below grade level in reading skills
- Minority students make up a high percentage of the school population

Teacher victimization is highest in large-city schools, followed by small-city, and then suburban schools. Rural schools have the lowest crime rates.

School crime increases with these factors:

- School size
- Number of students taught by each teacher
- Extent to which teachers have less access to the materials needed for teaching

When you read the list, you may be surprised to note that almost every point could be influenced by the teachers' representative group. The National Education Association and the United Federation of Teachers are working with school boards on school size, the number of students taught by each teacher, and the number of students assigned to each class. Further, individual teachers can influence the quality of education in their schools through what they do in their classrooms. *You* can enhance reading levels. *You* can embrace and challenge minority students to succeed academically and socially.

A Major Myth About School Crime

There are many myths about school crime. One is that dangerous schools are dangerous because they are located in high crime

areas. However, in many cases, the school *is* the high crime area. The National Institute of Education found that the risks to youngsters between 12 and 19 are greater in school than out. Remember that over 50% of all those arrested for any offense in America are teenagers, so teachers are already working with the primary crime-age population.

A. S. Regnery, a former director of the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice, said that "while children spend only about 25 percent of their waking hours at school, almost 40 percent of all teenage robberies occur in school" (1984, pp. 2-3). The youth offenders and their victims are both at school. This same school-age population is a viable market for street drugs and gang recruitment.

The last comprehensive survey on school violence, school vandalism, and school safety resulted in a 1978 report to Congress from the National Institute of Education. This report, *Violent Schools-Safe Schools*, indicated that about 12% of all teachers in America reported the in-school or at-school theft of materials valued at over $1.00 during a typical month. About one half of one percent of all teachers were physically attacked during a typical 1-month period. Of those attacked, 20% required treatment by physicians. On many occasions, teachers become victims through stopping or attempting to stop attacks against students.

Teachers and parents alike would be quite dismayed if they knew the total number of criminal events occurring in their school system. If you believe that data relating to violence is being purposefully withheld by the school administration, you may be less concerned or less afraid than is appropriate. The truth will help you deal with reality. Ask for help in getting the truth.

Teachers' "Right to Know"

Because of the Federal Privacy Act, many school systems intentionally withhold data on violent students. The teenager transferred in midyear could indeed be a violent transfer or a gang member. Teachers should have access to data relating to violent students. They should insist on it. You can understand the school system's position in nonreporting. They don't want a student with

a bad reputation to be negatively stereotyped. They want that student to have a fresh start at getting back into the educational process.

However, you have the right to know if the 16-year-old in your class used a knife, gun, or baseball bat on someone in the past. Today, this information is withheld in most school systems. It is withheld from the teachers most likely to encounter this student in an act of violence.

Some communities are countering this trend. Increasingly, courts are ordering the sharing of juvenile records as a method of curbing juvenile gang activity and juvenile drug distribution. The landmark order (first mandated in March 1989) is credited to C. Robert Jameson, the presiding juvenile court judge in the Superior Court of Orange County, California.

Denial

Many teachers are misinformed about violence in their schools because their administration doesn't want to tell them the truth. Actually, there is a natural tendency to deny. We do it in our private lives, at home, and even in our institutions. Parents often deny problems at their own homes. "I am not a drunk." "I don't need psychiatric counseling." "I didn't mean to hurt her, I just lost my temper this once." Families hide the secrets of incest, drug abuse, physical assault, and emotional abuse.

School boards, superintendents, and principals often do the same thing in educational institutions. They deny that they have any problems—even though they have big ones! Because they don't know how to deal with these issues, many school administrators counsel teachers to keep assault-related information confidential:

> Don't call the police. Your student didn't really hurt you. You didn't even have to go to the emergency room. Let's deal with this matter administratively. It will be better for you, the school, the parents, and the child if we don't have to call the police. If we don't handle this carefully, you could be sued.

One typical response is to blame the teacher. Picture this discussion between a principal and the teacher:

> I've got 73 teachers in this school. Only 2 other teachers were assaulted here this year and you were assaulted three times. Nobody else has this same problem. I think there is something about your personality that incites these attacks. If *you* can't solve this problem soon, I am not going to give you a satisfactory teaching evaluation.

So the next time the teacher gets clobbered, he or she keeps quiet. A complaint is never made at all. The teacher suffers victimization alone, without any help or support from the administration. And the word gets around the teachers' lounge—so nobody tells the principal about any but the most violent of incidents, or those incidents witnessed by others.

Bobby Carswell, president of the Houston Teachers' Association, stated that it's common in Houston for teachers not to report assaults to either police or their principals. Some fail to report these events because of their administrators' reactions. Others have concerns that an assault will negatively impact their career. They don't want a permanent record of a violent event maintained in their personnel folder, fearing that this information could be detrimental at some point in the future (White, 1987).

The American Association of School Administrators sponsored a study that indicated the reasons administrators (and some teachers) refrained from notifying the police of criminal events:

- They wish to avoid bad publicity and/or litigation.
- They fear they will be blamed or regarded as ineffective.
- Some offenses are considered too minor to report.
- They prefer to rely on their own security and discipline procedures rather than involve law enforcement officials in school-based problems.
- They suspect the police and courts will not cooperate. (Rubel & Ames, 1986)

Not all administrators agree with this concept. For example, John Ellis, superintendent of the Austin, Texas Independent School District, disagreed:

> It is foolish for a principal to be concerned about reporting an assault to the central office. What would reflect badly is not

reporting it. It's not bad to have a problem. What is bad is to fail to deal with the problem properly. (White, 1987, p. 8)

Underreporting

Relatively few school districts report campus crime. Rarely are police called, even when serious crimes occur. Some schools underreport crime. Other schools camouflage crime or lower the level of its reported seriousness. The "camouflage" charge is made when serious crimes, such as rape or felony assault, are not reported or are understated in the annual report to the school board.

The *Violent Schools-Safe Schools* study conducted by the National Institute of Education indicated that two thirds of the assaults requiring medical attention were not reported to the police by school authorities. As Arnold Goldstein and Ronald Huff report in *The Gang Intervention Handbook*, "Accountability for increasingly serious, violent criminal behavior is at an all-time low as violators are shielded from legal consequences through underreporting of crime" (1993, p. 290).

During my work on this book I interviewed Bob Nations, senior consultant at a school crisis management firm. He told me about the following incident that recently occurred in a Southeastern state:

> A 12-year-old boy went to school with a loaded revolver. There were three live cartridges in a cylinder capable of holding six rounds. The youngster placed the revolver against the head of another student and pulled the trigger two times. Fortunately, the cylinder was aligned over empty chambers. The weapon did not discharge. An administrator took the pistol away before the aggressor pulled the trigger again.

The school, with the permission of the victim's parents, handled the incident as a disciplinary matter. The matter was not even referred to the police or the youth court. No criminal charges were filed. The only discipline applied was that of in-school detention and counseling.

In another school, Nations reported on an attempted rape by a student against another student:

> A large male teenager was reading in a study hall. The teacher left the study hall for a brief period. Upon his return he saw that the student was attempting to rape a very young coed. The young man ripped her dress up and her panties down. He pushed her over a library table just as the teacher interceded. Other students were present, but no one had challenged the youngster—they were afraid of him. This was not a consensual act, the victim was screaming and begging for help. The teacher ordered the student to stop. When the would-be rapist failed to respond, the teacher was forced to subdue him. Blows were exchanged before the attack ceased.

Had the teacher not taken this action, the rape would have been consummated within the next few seconds. Surely all would agree that this was a serious crime, yet the incident was never reported to police authorities. The school dealt with the transgression as if it were a normal disciplinary matter.

The *Violent Schools-Safe Schools* study showed that very few students and very few faculty members officially report crimes through the criminal justice system. Many don't even report it to school administrators. A teacher may reason, "After all, if the principal, superintendent, or school board isn't going to do anything about it anyway, I don't need to be inconvenienced with all this paperwork and bureaucratic hassle."

No one really knows the number of teachers who are victims of violence on a local, state, or national level. If you believe you are working in a relatively safe school system, you may be wrong. However, your school may be relatively safe. But you won't know because the majority of teacher attacks don't make the papers or the evening news. Only when guns or other weapons are used, or when serious injury occurs, are these incidents deemed newsworthy.

Discover Your True Teacher Assault Level

You must discover your true threat level. You can't know the real threat until you discover the correct number of crimes and attacks

committed against teachers. You may find that you teach in a very dangerous environment, or you may find that you serve in a safer school. Insist that your school administrator collect information on all reported disturbances. Call for a comprehensive safety and security assessment.

Make sure your teacher representative group gives priority to your safety in your annual employment contract. Demand protection as a part of your collective bargaining agreement. You can mandate receipt of safety- and security-related violation reports in your school and in your school system in your next contract.

If your school board, superintendent, or principal won't help, perhaps it is time to set up some teacher-based records. This does not have to be a complex task. All the security information needed in reference to a single event could easily be printed on a standard 5 × 7 card.

First, appoint or elect a disruption recording teacher (DRT) for each school. Record any attack or threat of attack against any teacher and keep it on file. Insure that all serious offenses against students are reported as well. Violence against students may indicate a strong group ethic that could well spill over against school employees, teachers, and administrators. Student violence, gang problems, drug problems, and disorder on or near your campus could also be a strong indicator of problems that could impact your safety.

This record-keeping activity has many peripheral benefits. If a student tells a teacher, "I'm going to get even with you for failing me on this test," the teacher should immediately report the threat. Tell your principal, your disruption record keeper, and your law enforcement liaison officer. If a student really intends you harm, he or she is now on record. The suspect is identified and targeted before he or she has the opportunity to carry out the offense. By administratively confronting the student after the threat, but before it can be carried out, the teacher may deter the crime.

The report itself will also be of value if future verification is needed in a school hearing or in a court of law. Record all known threats against students or teachers. Include reports on drug and gang activity as well as complaints against individuals.

Find Out Where the Problem Is

In a school system comprising many campuses, some schools are going to be safer than others. Historically, the junior high school or the middle school has been the most dangerous. High schools are next higher at risk. Elementary schools and kindergartens are at the lowest risk in most types of incidents. The exception is for hostage events relative to parental child-custody cases or random shooting incidents.

The first question to ask is, Which schools have the most disorder, drug problems, gang activity, violence, and other forms of disruptive behavior? Then the other questions follow: Why are these schools more violent? What administrative remedies could resolve these problems? Are these schools more violent or disruptive because they are in high-crime neighborhoods? Or are they in safe neighborhoods but have a lack of applied discipline? What about the high-risk school in an upper-middle-class neighborhood? Should we question the quality of school leadership, or should we question the policies set by the superintendent and the board? We definitely should question the absence of any printed policy or guiding principle in this area.

When you discover why some schools are safer than others, you can attempt to recreate the same structure, discipline, and academic program at your school. The second step is to determine the safest locations in your school. Why are these locations safer?

Keep a schematic diagram of your school's floor plan. Use the floor plan to keep up with your problem locations. The DRT should place colored tacks on the locations where problems occur. A red tack could signify an attack against a teacher. A blue tack could signify an attack against a student. You could use various colors for specific methods of attack. Perhaps a yellow tack could symbolize a knife assault, a purple tack could represent a fist fight, and an orange tack could represent a firearms incident. When you complete this process, you will have a very acceptable trend analysis chart and you will know what types of offenses are being committed and where they are being committed.

Usually, the classroom is the safest place in the school. Most disruptions take place in the stairways, hallways, cafeterias, and outside

recreational zones. Hallways and stairways often become danger zones between class periods. At the more dangerous schools, the entire school facility can become a battleground for delinquents and opposing gangs.

Schools can transfer or redistribute gang members, youth drug cartels, and other units of continuing criminal enterprise. Sometimes this action can break up a youth gang. However, in some areas, this may actually enlarge the total problem, redistributing gang leaders and gang recruiters over an increasingly larger area.

In some cities, youth court or family court judges will not allow student reassignment from their neighborhood school. They believe that this is "not in the best interest of the child." But schools should have some rights, too. A school system is responsible not just to the individual student but to the entire student-age population as well.

Now that we better understand the extent of school violence, and how denial, camouflaging, and underreporting contribute to it, lets look at what we can do. Let's evaluate our options. Let's examine the problem so we can be prepared to cope with it. Let's hope for a better school tomorrow.

Hope

Hope comes when teachers decide to do something about safer schools. Hope comes when schools, which were once very violent, are now found to be functioning without violence. Hope comes when everybody at school works for a more secure environment. Hope comes when you stop giving these excuses:

- We can't stop this problem.
- The courts won't let us establish order and discipline here.
- My principal is so afraid of being sued that he or she is a major part of the security problem.

Hope comes when you stop wishing and decide to work toward a more security-conscious vision of the future. The situation is never hopeless. Stop looking only at the problem. Look for a solu-

tion. Focus not on the way things are but on the way you wish things to be. Brainstorm with your fellow teachers. Develop a written plan that you can present to your school board.

On paper, create the school that you want to spend your career in. Then work toward creating a school to meet your plan requirements. Accept your vision as a reality. You will be surprised when you realize that most of your quality education projections will commingle effectively with security and crime-prevention plans.

Preparing for the Inevitable: How Teachers Can Help

How do you prepare for adversity, danger, and crime? Three major obstacles usually prevent teachers from developing viable safety programs:

1. Problem denial.
2. A feeling of hopelessness.
3. Failure to solicit the voluntary and wholehearted cooperation of students, staff, teachers, administrators, and parents.

The first problem you can deal with by discovering what your threat level actually is. The second problem can be impacted by discovering that you *can* create a safer school environment. The third problem can be solved through strong leadership. Other schools have lowered crime rates at their sites. Some schools, located in incredibly dangerous neighborhoods, have created highly successful safety zones and security networks.

Crime prevention approaches are usually successful if they are carried out in a vigorous and progressive manner. Retail businesses, manufacturers, warehousers, manufacturing plants, and

even neighborhoods have learned how to influence crime. The successes of crime prevention programs, environmental criminology, and environmental security programs may also give hope to the teacher.

Even if you are acting alone, you can make a difference. Working together with other teachers, or the administration, you can accomplish much more. If you simultaneously encourage student participation, your school security program will undoubtedly succeed. If you generate enthusiastic student support and establish a school-age peer system, you will make a remarkable difference.

You need a dialogue, not a monologue. Get your students to tell you what they want. Get them to tell you what they perceive in terms of safety needs. Get them to understand that school crime is everybody's business, not just that of the faculty or of the police. There must be an understanding that every student has something to lose and has something to gain. This understanding can evolve a student-teacher partnership that will create a highly successful crime prevention program.

Who's Responsible for School Safety?

Security responsibilities belong to every citizen. Certainly it belongs to you as well. It is not simply the police officer's or the school security officer's responsibility. It is not the principal's exclusive responsibility either, though he or she is accountable at the school for the implementation of safety and security approaches. School safety is also the student's responsibility and the parent's responsibility. Only through working with students, parents, police or security officers, and your principal can you hope to succeed.

Parent-teacher-student involvement is difficult to obtain. Most schools have a very small parent/teacher organization, if they have one at all. I know, because my wife and I raised five children. We always attended school functions, supported school efforts, assisted in any way asked, and volunteered in many more. But how many times was the PTA or PTO meeting hall nearly empty? Way too often.

When there is a crisis, however, there isn't going to be a small parent-teacher-administrator meeting. While I was writing this material, there was a double murder. A student and the teacher attempting to protect the student were murdered at a "peaceful" suburban middle school. Seven hundred concerned parents showed up at this emergency PTA meeting! Parents became so angry during the program that the principal was escorted from the meeting by the police. Several teachers were also abused verbally. The parents felt that the school was negligent in responding to this crisis.

Crisis Management Preparation

Crisis management is a distinctive process, addressing multiple issues. In a sense, this entire book is about that process. As we saw in Chapter 1, you first need an analysis of the crime problem. The second step mandates that policies be planned, designed, and published. Once the broad policy definitions have been delineated, specific plans should be developed and implemented. Training should then provide the structure and understanding necessary for appropriate policy implementation.

Bob Nations, a school crisis management consultant, defines a crisis as "any and all act(s) or event(s) determined disruptive to the normal routine of the school environment" (1993, p. 9). Webster defines crisis as "a point that determines the outcome, good or bad." Steven Fink, author of *Crisis Management: Planning for the Inevitable*, calls a crisis "a turning point" (1986, p. 15). Many teachers believe the pivotal point for a school crisis is when things go from bad to worse.

A spontaneous reaction is never of the same quality as a planned response. When there is little forethought, and no planning, the crisis reaction may be totally inappropriate. Sometimes the "right" things can be done at the "wrong" time. Avoiding mistakes is probably more important than any other agenda.

Often, school officials will be reluctant to consider planning for a crisis, noted Daniel Carden, former principal of the West End Christian School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where two

heavily armed men held a group of elementary students hostage for more than 12 hours in February 1988.

"It's like a will," he said. "People are afraid to write one because they think they will die if they do." (Jennings, 1989, p. 27)

The worst time to prepare for a crisis is after it has already occurred. Avoidance planning and training can guarantee that a crisis does not bring your entire organization to a standstill. You do not want to lose sight of your normal duties as you attempt to solve the crisis. Advance planning minimizes the impact of the crisis.

Mistakes can create secondary or tertiary crises that almost overwhelm resolution of the original crisis. A thoughtless public comment during a crisis may overshadow all of the good accomplished. The old cliché that any reaction followed vigorously is better than no reaction at all is a myth. Most organizations react inappropriately because they haven't planned and because they are not prepared. They have no policy or procedural manual.

The school board should form a Crisis Management Planning Committee. These planners should be charged with policy recommendations covering violent crime and crime responses, suicide and suicide responses, drug problems, and drug responses.

Crisis Management Planning Committee

The first step toward preparing for the inevitable is to plan for it. Your school needs a security plan, a crisis management plan, policies to enhance the plan, and a procedural agenda. A Crisis Management Planning Committee should be created and membership should include the superintendent or an associate superintendent; a member of the school board; principals; counselors; teachers; transportation personnel; maintenance supervisors; police, fire, and ambulance services; hospital representatives; parents; and youth court and youth detention personnel.

The act of planning is efficient, effective, and economical. You confront the variables of crime, drugs, and violence. The planning process is also therapeutic, reducing the stress and anxiety levels

of all teachers. You create an environment where it is acceptable—even encouraged—to talk about the unacceptable. You can then fully discuss the gangs, violence, and drugs, as well as the fear associated with these problems. Steven Fink writes: "The plan is nothing more than a tool to enable you to solve the crisis. However, the better your crisis management plan—the better your tools" (1986, p. 66).

The planning stage is the first step in developing a school crime prevention tool kit. The act of planning also produces confidence, the confidence of knowing you have studied the problem and have decided how to deal with it.

A multiple focus approach is normally applied. The three approaches include prevention, intervention, and postvention. Through realizing the multiple stage approach, the planning committee can respond as appropriate to prevention or precrisis indicators. The precrisis stage relates to problems being recognized before they are actualized. A shop teacher hears there is going to be a major gang confrontation. He may be able to stop it. An English teacher reads a child's essay and discovers that the student is considering suicide. The teacher refers the child to the counseling service.

The crisis stage is an immediate response to something that just happened or is happening. Gang violence, a shooting, or a suicide could be the emergency. You will need to respond appropriately. In many situations, the police, fire, ambulance, and other community emergency services also may be called.

Postvention refers to the after-the-fact work. Counseling, post-trauma specialists, mental health professionals, and social workers may work with educators to minimize the physical and emotional trauma of the event. Faculty, staff, and students may all be traumatized. The stress must be dealt with promptly. Victims and witnesses to a tragedy should be allowed to ventilate their feelings in a healthy manner.

Planners usually request a school crime and crisis avoidance seminar. Training potential victims will complete the crime avoidance toolkit. This will help the teacher maintain his or her composure when faced with adversity.

Steven Fink discusses the stages of a developing crisis. He uses the word *prodrome* to describe the first stage. Prodrome means "to run before." It is a warning sign and a precrisis indicator (1986). Seymore Vestermark, Jr., and Peter Blauvelt called school prodromes "critical indicators" in *Controlling Crime in the School*. These specialists stated that you should constantly monitor critical indicators.

> Indicators are measures of ongoing processes which are important in making plans and taking actions. . . . For other specialists, an indicator is simply a category of events which has been defined for some purpose. . . . For the official concerned with school security, the most critical indicators are the types and frequencies of particular crimes and problems which are occurring in and around school. From these indicators you can define the magnitude of the problems you face, the kinds of programs you need and the climate of relative security or anxiety that may already exist in a particular school. (1978, p. 36)

Any crime is a critical indicator. The crime may also indicate a trend. Usually crimes are divided into two primary categories—crimes against persons and crimes against property. Schools should also be concerned with the so-called victimless crime category and with status offenses. Curfew violations, chronic parental disobedience, and truancy are good examples of status offenses. Once a child becomes 18 years of age, these offenses are no longer crimes.

Gang graffiti and ritualistic crime graffiti are important indicators. Graffiti should be photographed as soon as it is noticed. Then it should be eradicated, cleaned off, or painted over. Gangs use graffiti to claim ownership of specific territory. A school must not allow any gang or ritualistic group to make a strong claim to any location on campus, or the campus as a whole.

In developing crisis plans you should decide what your organization should do. Study the types of crises you might confront. What is your organization's response capability? Many schools have lamented the fact that they were not prepared to cope with riots, drive-by shootings, a rape on campus, the murder of a faculty member, or a student's death by homicide or suicide.

Each school needs a good, but simple, crisis management plan. The plan should be precise. There is no room for misunderstandings in a crisis. A simple plan will not be misunderstood during an ongoing crisis. You should always assume that your weakest teacher will be on site when an emergency occurs. Even your most emotional teacher can follow a mandated policy list:

1. Call 911
2. Call the superintendent's office
3. Curtail access to the crisis area, etc.

People don't always think logically during an emergency. One principal was alerted to an emergency outside. He responded and discovered that a child had broken his neck in a fall from a sliding board. Death occurred instantaneously. What the principal did after checking for vital signs was to return to his office. With the office door open he made a telephone call within the hearing of his staff and a campus visitor. He called the school's insurance agency to see what the school's coverage was. Had he called 911, an ambulance service, or the parents, the school system would never have paid such a large civil award to the parents, who successfully sued the school.

The Crisis Management Planning Committee is charged with the responsibility of developing policies and procedures for each school. The Crisis Action Team (CAT) is charged with the responsibility of discharging and administering those policies, according to Bob Nations in his *Comprehensive Crisis Management Planning Manual*. The CAT members should be chosen by training, background, personality traits, and their ability to get along with others on the team. These team members must be able to communicate constructively during stressful periods.

The CAT membership should include the principal; counselor(s); teachers; the school nurse; maintenance personnel; transportation representatives; police, fire, and EMT personnel; mental health professionals; and members of the mental health community. Those professionals not needed for a particular crisis can be dropped as needed.

Many of the plans a CAT will need are probably preexisting. Your county civil defense unit or your local fire department may help with hurricane, tornado, flood, and fire problems. The problems a CAT may be expected to confront normally deal with a catastrophic human-caused event. Deaths from suicide or murder, rape, the threat of death, bomb threats, or classroom hostage events are the responsibility of the CAT.

Even a natural death at your school will require a plan. Heart attacks, strokes, and athletic accidents create emotional crises among the student body. Bombings or bomb threats also cause many peripheral problems. When a murder or a suicide occurs at your school, you really have a problem.

Many school systems are well prepared for the postcrisis activities needed after an emergency. After a death, perhaps your district will bring in a team of counselors from other schools. These team members are trained, ready, and prepared to work with students having a difficult time dealing with the crisis and its aftermath.

> After a shooting at Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California, Principal Patricia Busher had her maintenance personnel work all night to remove the bloodstains and the bullet holes. At Hubbard Woods Elementary School in Winnetka, Illinois, Principal Streedain said, "The maintenance personnel painted and carpeted the room where the shooting took place and moved the classes around so this room didn't get known as the second-grade classroom where some kids got shot." (NSSC, 1990, p. 19)

Many school systems fail dismally, however. When other agencies are called in, what will the school do? What will the police do? How will we do it? How will they do it? In what order should we do it? Can we work together? These questions must be addressed *before* anything happens.

A pipe bomb exploded at Newbury Park High School in Ventura County, California, in 1988. Fortunately, most of the students had been at an assembly program when the device was detonated. Those at the assembly program did not even hear the explosion. When police arrived, the school administrators were instructed to evacuate the school.

However, when the assembled group was told to evacuate, pandemonium erupted. Students started running, jumping over fences, and scattering. They were reassembled on the football field and given supervision. Later, classes were dismissed for the day when additional bombs were found.

In a shooting at Pinellas Park High School in Pinellas Park, Florida, in 1988, parents were particularly irate over the school's handling of events during and immediately after the incident:

> One parent said that immediately after the shootings occurred Thursday, her son told her that front office personnel locked their doors, leaving beleaguered students trying to flee the cafeteria, banging on the office doors, begging for safe harbor from the violence that was taking place. (NSSC, 1990a, p. 19)

Locking the doors was understandable, even if frowned upon. But panic is never an appropriate response when lives are at risk. Planning could prevent these errors.

School and Classroom Discipline

In a NSBA publication, Cuervo, Lees, and Racey state that "schools that offer opportunities for all students to experience academic success tend to have fewer disciplinary problems" (1984, p. 38). Discipline is often associated with corporal punishment. That is not the image I am trying to impart, however. I accept the definition of Dennis Challinger, a school crime specialist with the Australian Institute of Criminology. He said, "Discipline is simply an acceptable form of social training, a means by which teaching can be facilitated and as an educational process" (1987, p. 40).

Discipline is associated with the concept of order and the keeping of rules. Society expects a disciplined school environment. Many citizens expect an effective institutional response to problems of school discipline, even if as individuals they don't always succeed in controlling the behavior of their own children.

> Schools with good discipline make every effort to encourage and reward positive behaviors. Rules and procedures are clearly communicated, understood, and enforced. Reasonable punishment is used as a last resort.
>
> Improvements occur when teachers know how to communicate with difficult students. Some of the techniques used in the study included comforting and reassuring students, using more symbolic rewards, and developing contracts with students concerning their behavior. Researchers also found that successful teachers used punishment less and provided more support and encouragement than less skilled teachers. (NSBA, 1984, p. 39)

A disciplined school environment is one in which learning can be imparted, where teachers can teach well, and where students can learn without excessive interruptions. A disciplined school is a resourceful school teaching the 4 Rs and the three Cs. As presented in Dennis Challinger's *Crime at School*, the four Rs include respect, responsiveness, responsibility, and rights. The three Cs include cooperation, consideration, and courtesy.

The resourceful (disciplined) school is able to give more rights to each student. When students respect other students, the faculty, and staff, they are responsive to proper authority, accept responsibility for their own actions, and are resourceful.

Many students, especially those from dysfunctional homes, have not been taught nor have they accepted these values. It is noted in Challinger's book that "many students no longer accept punishment gracefully, and there is a real risk of a student reacting to violence, with violence" (1987, p. 7).

Dismissal or Expulsion: A Cautionary Note

Someday society will recognize what teachers have realized for years: There are a small number of students for whom schools do not have the resources to cope. When students cannot be controlled and so intrude on the discipline of the school that even the

most competent and experienced teachers cannot influence their behavior, they should be removed. When students threaten the safety and well-being of the school, they should be removed. When particular students continually intrude on the learning process and have a significant deleterious effect on the learning process of other students, they should be removed.

This does not mean that you shouldn't allow a child the opportunity to complete an education. It certainly does not mean that you should indiscriminately dismiss or expel children. In the 1970s, children were being dismissed for facial hair, improper dress, or wearing the wrong colors, rather than for serious offenses. Less than 8% of all dismissals or expulsions were for violence, vandalism, or theft. Some educators called these policies "push-out" programs.

Push-out programs exacerbate existing problems, increase hostility against teachers, and often reward a child by allowing the opportunity to watch TV, goof off, or hang around the neighborhood. Robert Rubel, in his book *The Unruly School*, notes that studies of push-out programs inferred racism because they usually affected African-American and Hispanic students more than Caucasians.

Expulsions for truancy are especially inappropriate. Quite often the reason for truancy is fear. Some kids are afraid to go to school. That's why they miss so much. They are afraid of the walk to school. They are afraid of the hallways and playgrounds at school and they are afraid to use the restroom facilities. They are angry at the teachers because they feel insecure. Instead of punishing truants further, let's make sure that we deal with the causes of their truancy. Improving security and the quality of students' education will improve attendance averages dramatically.

Some students may be considered academically marginal because of their fear. It is difficult to pay attention to the teacher if you believe you may be assaulted in the classroom. It is difficult to concentrate if you know that you will be extorted on the way to lunch. And it is easy to "skip" school when you are dealing with these fears. When we deal with delinquents for marginal offenses, we should always look for alternative disciplinary measures. There is too much expulsion for nonviolent offenses.

Individual or group counseling sessions can be provided for truant students. These students need to know that unexcused absences will never be tolerated. When student needs are not being met, unconventional curriculums and special programs should be established. Peer programs, community volunteers, and businessperson "mentor" programs may also assist in developing viable alternative programs. Some school systems are also establishing tutorial services to help truant students who are embarrassed that they cannot keep up and that they cannot perform well at school.

Yes, we need to take dangerous children out of the general school population, and there are educational alternatives for them. There are alternative schools, vocational schools, and schools run for delinquents. These schools should be utilized when neither parents nor teachers can control the behavior of children. There are even alternative programs for use within schools for appropriate children. Saturday schools, time-out rooms, cool-off rooms, or even in-school detention may be used effectively.

Other Schoolwide Considerations in Reducing Crime

Schools should already have policies and programs in place to protect students and teachers alike. But some don't and others are inadequate. You can influence policy and practice in several ways.

First, use the results of your teacher assault survey suggested in Chapter 1. Go to your principal, superintendent, or school board members with the facts. If you've collected information on the most dangerous areas in your school and you believe inadequate measures are being taken to make them safer, use these data to emphasize the seriousness of your requests.

You will have more of an impact if you can get other teachers or staff members to work with you. Call for a Crisis Management Planning Committee to examine the evidence and to consider options for making schools a place for learning, not violence. You could circulate a petition to demonstrate the level of support in your school. Your teachers union representative should be recruited to assist your efforts to make your school a safer place.

The literature clearly indicates that school violence correlates directly with the violence of the community served by that school. Lower a community crime rate and the school incident level will decline as well. School violence also correlates directly with the presence of nonstudent youth. These nonstudents are very likely to be pre delinquent or delinquent. Their presence increases both crimes of violence and property crimes as students travel to and from school.

School violence, as we have seen, also escalates in direct proportion to school size and class population. It is easier to manage 300 to 400 students than 1,200 to 1,500. Having classes of fewer than 30 students decreases individual aggression and hostility. In smaller classes, individual students get more attention, and marginal students can get the assistance they need to pass or make satisfactory grades. Students don't get "lost" in a small or medium-population class. The number of different students taught each week by a single teacher is also important. Teachers who are not overwhelmed by a solid mass of students can get to know each student as an individual.

And let's face our own negative behavior. In schools that are too large there can also be a lot of teacher hostility toward students. Where teacher stress is overwhelming, student-focused aggression is often the response.

Teachers can establish rapport and develop relationships in a proper educational setting. Continuous contact with the same students reduces violence. Teachers have more and better quality control in this environment. Teachers can control the smaller classes effectively. Class size is no longer a "quality of education" issue. School class size is a major school security issue.

Ongoing Safety Efforts: What Teachers Can Suggest

For a student to commit a crime, he or she must have motive and opportunity. Placing environmental constraints and "people influencing" programs at school will significantly impact the opportunity to commit crime at your school. Install barriers to restrict access to your school. Place impediments and restrictions aimed toward limiting the number of weapons smuggled onto your campus.

Increase the amount of time necessary to penetrate and escape your campus. Create "opportunity minimizing programs." Although you may never be able to alter the intent, desire, or the motivation for crime at school, you can divert crimes to other areas. You can deter crimes on your school properties.

Elements of Crime

Although you cannot always change the heart of an angry teenage boy or the attitude of a cynical teenage girl, you do have certain controls. You can use these controls to make a difference, but you

must understand the concurrent elements of each criminal event. In analyzing every crime you will find there are four basic elements to each crime, or each transgression:

1. There is the law, or a school policy.
2. There is a violator.
3. There is a targeted victim.
4. There is a *place*.

Without a location where the violator, the victim, and the law come into conflict, there can be no crime. Crime prevention usually attempts to impact the one element that can be most influenced—the place, location, or environment in which the crime is to be accomplished.

Technological Designs

Environmental design to prevent, deter, or avoid crime was first introduced in Robert L. O'Block's book *Security and Crime Prevention*. O'Block said that environmental design (or redesign) includes making

1. Access to the offender's target impossible, too difficult, or too time-consuming.
2. The likelihood of detection or exposure on the premises too great, by eliminating places where the criminal could conceal his or her presence.
3. Arrival of the police or security officers likely when the offender is still on the premises or before he (or she) can make a clean getaway.
4. Successful escape improbable because of poor escape routes and probable police interception.
5. It likely the offender will be identified through increased observation opportunities. (1991, p. 303)

Environmental security (ES) is a very effective school crime influencing tool. This tool can be used well within public or private

schools. ES is very effective against crimes of violence, crimes of fear, and all predatory crimes. ES can also be quite effective in dealing with school gang and drug problems.

Placing teachers and/or security officers at school entrances can minimize some of these risks. You can create a "visibility barrier" that will influence crime. Hall monitoring is an excellent but underused security practice in the contemporary school. In dangerous schools, teachers may use handheld metal detectors or the school may install metal detectors at entrances. High staff visibility will lower the incident level at your school.

Some environmental designs include the use of modern technology. Telephones, two-way communication consoles, and intercoms may be installed in the classroom. Bullhorns can be used in emergencies when power outages occur or when other communication equipment fails. Teachers can also have access to safety lights similar to those used to summon a stewardess on an airplane or a nurse to a patient's room at a hospital. Teachers could have these simple paging units answered in an administrative office or in the security office.

Increasingly, we are seeing the use of closed circuit television (CCTV) in schools, on school buses, and outside units facing corners or dangerous spots. Because school buses are also dangerous, many alternative schools now frisk and use metal detectors as the student gets on the bus.

These are simple and inexpensive security tools. Let us use these tools to protect ourselves, each other, and the students we supervise. We can use portable burglary and robbery alarm "panic" transmitters that are no larger than a box of paper clips. The teacher can carry one on the playground or into the cafeteria. This equipment—if it is properly maintained—can be used for school staff assigned to outside duties both before and after school or for outside supervision during school hours. If there is a problem—just push the button. If the equipment is working, you can have all the assistance you need, and you can have it quickly. Some panic transmitters have specialty buttons: Push the "medic" button if a child is injured or is having a convulsion. Push the "police" button if there is a security threat or if you see drug pushers operating adjacent to the school. Push the "fire" button if you see smoke.

As a security agency administrator, I supervised large numbers of officers at sporting and entertainment events. Often preexisting school rivalries, coupled with the exuberance of a fierce physical battle on the gridiron or basketball court, resulted in spillover violence off the field. I always found that my most important weapon was not my pistol. It was a portable radio. Today a belt-clipped cellular phone could also provide the same influence for the teacher. If something is perceived as a threat, you simply dial for the assistance of fellow staff members, school security officers, or the police.

You should also encourage the installation of convex mirrors in blind hallways or around corners so that teachers and students may see more clearly. The placement of closed circuit TV units, monitored from a central office, may have the same effect. However, the convex mirrors will give protection to everyone walking around the blind corner.

Of course, retrofitting old buildings is often cost-prohibitive. Older schools were designed with lots of doors and big windows. They were designed for convenience and easy access. Today, we usually desire a restricted access rather than ease of access. Securing an "old or open" facility is very expensive. Often you need to address people programs to alter behavior in these facilities.

People Program Designs

When you can't afford some of the technological applications, you may discover that you can create effective "school watch programs." These generate the cooperation of teachers and students. You alert others when crimes are being committed. You generate a new schoolwide attitude toward crime at your school. You create a NO TOLERANCE FOR CRIME program. You involve students in a unique way in the plan and in the crime prevention program. In fact, you can't have a viable school security program without the active involvement and participation of the student body, as well as your fellow teachers.

In smaller schools students know whether someone is a guest or an intruder. In larger schools, this is almost impossible. Access protection in many schools includes an identification tag system.

Sophomores wear one color identification tag. Juniors wear another color identification tag. Seniors wear yet another color. Teachers wear tags of a different color.

Each ID tag has the student's picture on the tag. Visitors are also required to wear passes. Anyone who does not have a tag or a pass is an intruder, or a trespasser. The method quickly singles out any stranger. This simple method is fairly inexpensive and yet still can influence the behavior of gangsters, wanna-bes, and drug pushers.

To establish peer influencing systems, some schools establish crime prevention clubs. In other schools, selected seniors are given hall monitor duties. Students are issued armbands or white belts to signify their official status as crime reporters for the school administration. They too, may often carry communication equipment.

When I was the Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, I began to realize the value of monetary rewards. I have seen violators "set up" their own brothers and sisters, occasionally even a parent, for a few dollars. Some schools now offer monetary rewards of $20 to $25 to students who give an accurate tip on weapons in schools. The school promises confidentiality to the student informant. The reporting child gets the cash. Children who have been victimized get double pleasure through informing on former assailants. The assailant gets in trouble and the informer gets the money.

Other schools adopt a method used by the Washington State Department of Education. On almost every hallway of every school in their system there is a large 22 × 17 poster. It gives the universal sign for NO GUNS or DO NOT BRING GUNS. Then it says "KEEP OUR SCHOOLS SAFE! Report Weapons 1-800-862-GUNS, All calls are confidential."

One principal told me that the state office averages over 180 gun-call allegations each day. The system is working! Washington State Schools are safer than they were before. Each child is indoctrinated into a safety-first and NO GUNS system. This is a very important "people" crime prevention program.

At some schools parents now participate in parental patrols. These volunteers perform "school watch" programs on a voluntary basis, increasing the adult presence. School crime may be lowered with this active participation. In some schools the school

watch programs are staffed by volunteers from the American Association of Retired Persons. Even gang members don't want to attack somebody's grandparent.

You can also continue safe school programs beyond school properties. Some schools have developed "Safe Corridor Programs." Similar to neighborhood watch programs, this approach utilizes adults, senior citizens, and other children. Sitting in the safety of their own apartment or housing unit, those participating watch the streets during the periods children travel to and from school. If they see any problem at all, they simply dial 911. Hundreds of watchers create an environment where delinquents are less likely to attack, drug pushers are less likely to sell, and gangs are less likely to thrive.

School Policies and Rules

Because drugs, pistols, and large knives require hiding places, many students now are prohibited from carrying backpacks and large book bags. School policies may mandate a net container, similar to but stronger than those used to bag oranges. The netting is heavy enough to support the weight of the books, notebooks, and pencil cases, yet the contents are visible. Anyone carrying a weapon can be spotted. Some schools even ban baggy clothing and long coats, because both of these items may easily conceal weapons and narcotics. Other schools have removed student lockers from the school. In these schools each student must carry his or her materials throughout the day. This process removes yet another weapon and drug cache.

Because communication technology is necessary for students selling or protecting drugs, the school district should also consider the option of banning the use of all pagers and cellular phones at school. Some schools likewise ban the use of car phones if the communication package is installed on a students vehicle. If a student uses his parents' car and the vehicle is outfitted with this equipment, then the equipment must be removed before arriving at school. Vehicles equipped with car phones are banned from the student parking lot and from the streets around the school.

School Board Mandates

The effective work of units representing the National Education Association or the United Federation of Teachers could significantly increase the safety of all school personnel. You aren't required to work in dangerous schools. It just doesn't have to be this way. In high crime districts, some teachers are even provided reimbursement for losses suffered through personal thefts while at school. One possible school board policy model is that suggested by the National Education Association:

- The Association believes that when school personnel are the victims of physical attack, verbal abuse, harassment, or theft, they should receive the full support of their employer in pursuing legal and other remedies.
- The Association further believes that the local association must have the right to reflect the concerns of the profession at a student suspension or expulsion hearing.
- The Association urges its affiliates to cooperate with juvenile court systems to secure strict enforcement of juvenile law in cases involving disturbances in the public schools. (NSSC, 1987, p. 10)

Violence at Chicago schools and pressures by teachers influenced the creation of a Chicago Police Department School Task Force. Only the front doors on Chicago schools now have outside handles. They keep all other doors locked. All high school students and teachers are now required to wear identification tags. Other security approaches are being accomplished as well.

Professional Assistance

We are all told to "know our own limitations." Increasingly, school professionals are recognizing that the level of violence has escalated to the point that schools just can't handle it any more. It is time to bring in personnel who have been trained to handle and influence this type of violence.

Today there are over 530,000 men and women serving as city, county, metro, state, and federal police officers. Simultaneously, there are almost 800,000 privately sponsored uniformed officers, watchmen, detectives, and investigators. Many of these are professionals working extraordinarily sophisticated criminal response, crime prevention, and crime detection units for their industries.

The safest locations in America are those that are environmentally designed for security. Security design is a proven concept. It is time to use these protection concepts in school security as well. Although we cannot always redesign structures with blatant security weaknesses, we can use technology and personnel to protect the safety of all residents of the American school.

Even safe schools should call the crime prevention unit of the local police department and request a "security audit." Your police department has the best crime records available to your community. Also, many police officers have advanced training in security, crime avoidance, and crime prevention methods. These officers may be able to help you address all crime, safety, and security related issues.

If you have a negative bias toward police officers, you probably should talk to your local police crime prevention specialist. Most professional police agencies now require a bachelor's degree before consideration as a street officer. Preferred police assignments are enhanced by additional preparation. Each year, thousands of police officers complete master's degree programs. Hundreds complete their doctorates. Today's police officers are well prepared to practice and carry out their function.

Some schools use professional security services on a 5-day-a-week basis. Other school systems have roving security patrols on a 24-hour-a-day basis. These officers respond to burglary calls, after-hours trespassing complaints, and vandalism calls. Other school systems intermittently assign officers to individual schools. At some schools, officers are given a semipermanent assignment and are instructed to get to know the staff and the students. Many of these officers are able to make a significant difference.

The school district should not depend on school personnel to maintain a safe environment at extracurricular activities, especially ball games. All extracurricular activities incur certain risks.

While I was writing this book, a school beauty pageant turned ugly. A dispute over the judges' decision left a vice principal and a student seriously injured from gunshot wounds. School personnel are not trained to deal with the crimes being committed at their facilities.

School employees should still attend these events in their official capacities, but for public relations, not as police or security authorities. Off-duty police officers, auxiliary police officers, proprietary school board security services, or contractual security services can be used to provide protective services at these events. Usually a ratio of 1 officer to every 200 visitors is adequate. In difficult situations, you will need even more officers.

The school can also request two or three police cars to patrol the general area and provide backup. For safety, prompt response, and liability reasons, many school districts also ask that an ambulance and an emergency services paramedic technical unit be assigned at all athletic events. These emergency services are then immediately available if an athlete is injured, or if some other health problem occurs there at the facility.

The Troublemakers: What Teachers Need to Know

I recently learned about a violent incident at a school in a Southern state. A teenager brought a powerful handgun to school and discharged four gunshots into a crowded hallway. By the grace of God, not a single person was hit or injured. However, a serious crime occurred. This crime has not yet been officially reported to criminal justice authorities; it has been handled as a "disciplinary matter."

However, I don't believe that the principal, the superintendent, or the school board has the right to decide that the discharge of the weapon in a crowded school hallway should be treated in this way. It isn't just a disciplinary matter—it's a *crime* that has been covered up. If I were the local district attorney, I would have the principal arrested. He or she would then be brought to trial. Once a felony was committed the principal lost all discretion. If my child had been in the school hallway at time of the shooting, I would be making formal charges in courts of law or before the next grand jury of my county.

Paul Portera is a school principal in Grenada, Mississippi. In a recent discussion he shared this perspective:

> Principals often encounter situations which initially appear to be criminal acts. Often, upon closer examination, these acts are determined not to be criminal. An offense at school is criminal if the offender has criminal intent [or a degree of negligence considered unlawful]. In order to establish criminal intent, you must often indicate that the probable consequences of the act will be wrongful or harmful. The act must be deliberately committed. It cannot be an accident or an event unforeseen by reasonable men.

In most states, there is a civilian criminal investigation board called the *grand jury*. In these states, incidents of this nature can be investigated. If the grand jury decides to continue its inquiry, it will subpoena witnesses, calling for sworn testimony from teachers, students, the principal, the superintendent, and each member of the school board. Grand juries can accept hearsay in their deliberations, so information that could not be used in a formal criminal trial can be used in its fact-finding mission. In states in which there is no grand jury, or in which prosecutors fail to intervene in dangerous school events, civil suits could be filed against the school district, or public complaints might be broadcast through a formal press release.

Consultant Bob Nations was teaching a comprehensive crisis management school workshop when this shooting incident occurred. He asked his class (a group of principals, teachers, and counselors) what should first be done by school authorities. The first responding teacher stated that she felt that the gun dealer who sold the aggressor this weapon should be arrested. (If an illegal transfer occurred, this should be done, of course.) But have we somehow forgotten that a student was responsible for picking up the gun, loading it, taking it to school, and discharging it at another human being?

Neither poverty, nor ethnicity, nor drugs, nor gang association makes a violent assault acceptable. None of these excuses are valid. Not one mitigator makes the event legal. None excuse the delinquent from the crime. The delinquent has a responsibility to the school, to society, and to the courts. He or she will be held accountable for his or her actions. Although there may be mitigating

circumstances that would influence judicial decisions about the delinquent's future, there are no excuses in these circumstances.

Delinquents themselves, as well as many social service and teaching professionals, seem to believe that the delinquent is not responsible because of these factors:

- He or she is poor.
- He or she lives in the project.
- He or she hasn't had any advantages.

The general theme seems to be that if the above statements are true, then the delinquent is not responsible. Many delinquents also accept this theory. I interviewed many prison inmates who believed they were not responsible for their crimes because they were poor, lived in the project, had abusive, alcoholic, or drug-abusing parents, and had no advantages.

We paralyze the growth of an individual, as an individual, when we make him or her less responsible and less accountable to society. We slow down, rather than positively influence, the maturation process. We make these individuals less accountable when we fail to report the crimes they commit.

Today we have a crime explosion, and the young delinquents committing these crimes believe that they are not responsible. If they aren't responsible for their own crimes, then who is? Society is creating its own vulnerability. It is now important that we make a social value "U-turn" and reevaluate our school value system. Kids are responsible for their own behavior. They must be. So are adults.

This is one value that the school can influence. This value system—a person is responsible for his or her own behavior—can be positively influenced in the educational process by creating a peer accountability review system within the school and by positively influencing and encouraging those peer systems. Somewhere in our school curriculum we must again teach each child responsibility and accountability for his or her own actions.

Charles Walker III, principal of Lincoln Magnet High School in Tacoma, Washington believes in teaching his students responsibil-

ity. He also gave me a strong example of a principal sticking up for his teachers. He received a phone call from an irate mother as I was talking with him. He had expelled her child from his school on the previous day. The mother was discussing the expulsion over the phone. Walker said, "You just don't understand, I expelled your child from Lincoln High for life!" He continued:

> There are other high schools in this city and maybe the school board will let your child go to one of those schools someday, but your child will never, ever, enter this school again, even for a basketball game. If we see him, he will be arrested for trespassing. Nobody—I said nobody—hits one of my teachers!

There are four primary groups causing problems on campus. Certainly those who skip school and who are chronically tardy cause problems. However, those who cause the most violence on our campuses are those who are in attendance. They include gangs, substance abusers and traffickers, ritualistic groups, and vigilantes. This chapter describes the characteristics and problems posed by each of these groups and suggests ways the school can respond. This information can be used by teachers to lobby for the Crisis Management Planning Committee recommended and discussed in Chapter 2.

Gangs

Deviant lifestyles have always confronted school mores. Long hair, beards, mustaches, boys' earrings, and clothing styles were issues in the past. Today, schools face the problems of gangs, gang colors, signing, and drugs.

Many students, whether or not they are involved in gangs or drug subcultures, are unwilling to involve adults in problem confrontation. Often problem redefinitions occur as well. To an adult, a fight may be a criminal assault. To a child, a fight may be an acceptable way to handle a threat. To an adult, drugs are a crime. To a child, this could be an alternative lifestyle or a youth subculture. To an adult, a gang may be a group of thugs. To a child, it may be

his safety net and the only source of true emotional and physical security he or she has in the community. In their article "School-Based Interventions: Best Practices and Critical Issues," Donald Kodluboy and Loren Evenrud state:"Gangs are present within the boundaries of virtually every major school distinct in the United States" (1993, p. 257). And Ronald Stephens, in his article "School-Based Interventions: Safety and Security," says: "Although youth gangs have been a part of American life since the early 18th century, today's gangs pose a greater threat to public safety and order than at any time in recent history (1993, p. 219).

Gangs are no longer just intergenerational ethnic or neighborhood social clubs. Many gangs exist only for crime. Often the crime is the control of the local drug market. The crime may be extortion. Gang members may require payments from students for the freedom to walk unmolested to and from school, to use gang turf, to obtain protection, or to use certain school hallways, gymnasiums, or cafeterias.

Some school officials view gang membership as simply another behavior problem. The typical gang member has a poor attendance record, is inattentive in class, and often exhibits disruptive behavior. A high percentage of gang members are frequently suspended and expelled. But even expulsion does not keep the gang member away from school, unless there is a door security system. Many of these children sneak back on campus, causing even more problems for the school and the law enforcement agencies required to remove them.

If a school can create a substitute value system, many young people may avoid the gang recruitment process. Although the gang may be unacceptable to mature adults, it nevertheless fulfills a need for the child. If the school can create peer systems that fulfill needs, then gangs will not be so attractive.

Some children join gangs for protection. Protection from extortion, protection from being attacked, and protection from abuse are often given gang members. Children who join gangs also may have cultural, emotional, and attitudinal assimilation problems. They are often products of a weak family structure. The gang becomes their family. The gang gives them status, rank, and prestige.

Often these children have very poor self-esteem. They do not seem to have the ability to understand and cooperate with others outside their gang. A positive approach to discipline often works with gang members and pre-gang members. Attempting to attack the gang problem with fear and intimidation will only make the situation worse. The gang already knows how to use fear and intimidation. They don't need more lessons from the school administration.

Often gang members would like to leave the group, but they can't. Some were forced into the gangs initially. Now they can't survive without the group association. Without the protection of other gang members, they could become easy prey for other youth. Here is an account of a gang member who attempted to leave his gang: One night, he refused to participate in planned activities. On the next day, he told gang leaders that he was getting out. That night, at a local carnival, three members of his own gang wanted to fight, but he refused. As he left the fairgrounds, he was murdered (*Daily Sentinel Star*, April 12, 1993). Death may be the only way out in many gangs.

There are prevention and intervention strategies that can deter a child from gang activity. Principal George McKenna at the George Washington School in Los Angeles gave this advice on the school's role in deterring children from joining the gang subculture:

> Children will dress the way we allow them to dress. They will speak the way we allow them to speak. Schools should be institutions that form values, not conform to the attitudes of children. Schools must be responsible and must accept the responsibility. If we don't, no one else will. (NSSC, 1990b, p. 11)

A behavior code must be created with the input of school officials, students, parents, and the community. To maximize the utility of the code, it must be written, posted, and distributed. There should be no room for misunderstandings. Also, disciplinary measures associated with the code should not influence academic grades. If grades are affected because of rule violations, students will often rebel even more.

Because gangs often choose colors, bandannas, baseball caps, or jackets to indicate their gang affiliations, school administrators often ban certain items of clothing or colors. When "color" codes are created, the administrators should be very careful. In one community, a school board supervised the activities of 25 schools. Because of a developing gang problem, they decided to outlaw gang colors. Unfortunately, they had not carefully considered the matter. Under this policy they would need to purchase new band, football, basketball, and track uniforms at two of their larger schools. In this case, the price tag for the new "color-rules" would cost in excess of $50,000. And then the gangsters and wanna-bes could just change their colors, or switch baseball caps or bandannas.

Colors aren't the only problem associated with gangs. Other gang indications include graffiti and the presence of hand signals. Gangs have their own "signing" methods, similar to the methods used by the hearing impaired. Control of the graffiti, signing, and colors can greatly influence a school safety environment.

Teachers need to recognize the threat of gangs and recognize gang members. Bob Nations says that when you investigate gang membership, you should observe the following:

- Clothing: color, style, and manner of dress.
- Body markings: tattoos, extreme haircuts (punk, skinheads).
- Signs and symbols: graffiti, handsigns, jewelry.
- Peer associations: who, when, where.
- Attitude and behavior: rebellion (anti-authority), disruptive, drug use/abuse, low self-esteem.

Teachers should also understand that gangs quickly establish "no trespassing areas" on their own turfs. These locations may also be established at your school. These sites are usually clearly marked with graffiti, so if you insist that the graffiti are quickly removed you will be increasing the level of safety for yourself and your students. If a gang establishes territoriality in a particular part of your school complex, they are not going to allow teachers to enter there either. They will respond with threats or violence to anyone who encroaches on "their" space.

Substance Abusers

Once, substance abuse meant cigarette smoking in the school restroom. Later, we were concerned about marijuana. Then hallucinogenic drugs became a problem. Now we are concerned with methamphetamine, crack, crank, and cocaine, in addition to heroin, uppers, downers, and tranquilizers.

The National Institute of Education's *Violent Schools-Safe Schools* study found that over 3 million teenagers had problems with alcohol. In grades 10, 11, and 12, 1 in 4 students drank alcohol at least once a week. 6% of all 12th graders drank daily.

The Federal Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Research and Development Project found that the proportion of 7th-grade students reporting being high on drugs or alcohol at school range from 2.2% at some schools to nearly 10% at others (Regnery, 1984).

Although it is terrible to watch the impact drugs have on our society, we often look at drugs as a "victimless crime." This concept refers to the belief that narcotic abusers only injure themselves through their addictions and habits. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Illegal narcotic trafficking is now the biggest business in America. One of the primary markets for illegal drugs is school-age children. This is one of the reasons for the severity of penalties for drugs sold near schools, bus stops, and school zones.

In addition to the individual problems of addiction, there are other school safety and security issues relating to drugs. Where there are drugs, there is competition for sale, for franchise, and for distribution rights. Where there are drugs, there is money—and when cash is involved, there are rip-offs. Where there are drugs, there is violence. Where there are drugs, there are guns, knives, and other hand weapons. Where there are drugs, there are gangs.

Teachers cannot afford to look the other way where drugs are concerned. Drugs are a life-and-death matter. Keeping drugs, and the gangs running the drugs, out of your school is the single most important approach to developing a crime-free school strategy. No other strategy will ever work as well.

Ritualistic Groups

Ritualistic (satanic) cults are protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. However, schools should not tolerate gangs or ritualistic cults in their midst. Children who are socially alienated often find acceptance in these groups. Ritualistic graffiti are often their art form. Seemingly innocent graffiti may be sprayed under bridges, flood control channels, and freeway overpasses, often out of the sight of authority figures. In fact, the graffiti are placed in the lowest place possible so the symbols can be closer to hell and to Satan. Some of the ritualists like to decorate schools as well.

Watch for the symbols of Satan and the Antichrist. Many students wear the jewelry and clothing of this movement. Some of the kids may not realize the full impact of what they are doing—but others do. Although the First Amendment protects the basic freedoms of religious expression, ritualistic conduct beyond the law is not protected. As Bob Nations notes in his book *Ritual Crime*, there is no amnesty or immunity applied to individuals or groups that lends itself to a license or liberty to violate the law.

Ritualistic violence may include human sacrifice and serial suicide. One indication of this behavior would be of discovering a decapitated teenager at a local cemetery or of discovering a death coupled with a lobotomy. Ritualists may dedicate a fellow human being (usually a child or a teenager) to Satan, accepting a theology that the deceased then transcends to a better life. The same belief applies to ritualistic suicide.

If you have a bizarre suicide, you probably are going to have several more. The school crisis management plan should mandate that the closest associates of each victim be interviewed quickly. The school may successfully intervene. Counseling programs may help eliminate further deaths in a serial suicide cycle.

Vigilantes

Americans are taught to fight. Our TV productions report it, subliminally support it, and teach us how to fight and kill on

shows intended to entertain. When someone is wronged, Bronson, John Wayne, the Equalizer, or Clint Eastwood is going to fight through the system, and correct the wrong. We are taught these concepts in our literature, in our songs, on TV, in the movies, and in our culture. America has a violent culture. That culture is reflected in our schools.

There was a riot in a Northeastern school. The riot erupted over disagreements about security issues, specifically, the lack of security. The nicer kids were getting tired of being abused, extorted, ripped off, and bullied. They were tired of being caught up in internecine warfare between racial and ethnic groups. They were tired of gangs, they were tired of young freelancing drug pushers. They were tired of being scared.

Their response was violent, spontaneous, and overwhelming. This was not a small event. School was canceled the next day. The cancellation cost the school system several hundred thousand dollars. A large campus was fully encompassed in the disturbance.

Although your school system may not have a riot, it does have the same potential. Kids who are being bullied will ultimately rebel against those abusing them. When they do, it will be with an equalizer. Maybe the equalizer will be a baseball bat, but it could be a knife, or even a gun. When they rebel, everyone will be in danger, not just the rebels.

When we don't keep our schools safe, we "create" criminals. We create an unlawful response. We create tensions for which we as teachers cannot compensate. Keep a child intimidated for long enough and he or she will surely rebel.

Teachers' Liability and Rights

Liability is a major concern today. Most middle-class Americans carry substantial insurance policies on their homes and cars. Most businesses also subscribe, to minimize their losses, should a crisis occur. School districts are occasionally insured. Sometimes they are not.

Quite often teachers erroneously believe that they too are covered by the school board's insurance policy. They believe that the school's lawyer will represent them if there is a problem resulting from their official duty. They don't know that they will often need their own attorney. Others believe that they are protected by an ancient concept known as *sovereign immunity*. This immunity historically protected public agencies and their representatives from negligence lawsuits. Federal and state courts have recently nullified the last vestiges of this concept. Yet, often I talk to teachers who feel protected by this invisible legal safety net.

Sovereign immunity is a myth. There is no real protection remaining under this concept. Let me tell you what is going to happen. When something goes wrong, the school is going to be sued. When a child or a teacher is seriously injured, the school is going to be sued. When the attack could have been foreseen because of an increasing level of violence, the school is going to be sued. Prob-

ably a penalty called *punitive damages* will also be issued in addition to the actual cost of damages. Especially when a school administrator "camouflages" serious criminal activity, the school is going to be sued. And you could easily become involved in the lawsuit as well. All you have to do is follow the instructions established in a defective policy or do what an administrator orders.

Governments are now recognized as having the same level of responsibility that any corporation, business, or service is required to accept. School boards should also recognize that they have a moral and legal obligation to deter or prevent foreseeable risks. If they do not, then the school district is legally responsible for any incident occurring within its influence. Most courts accept the tenet that students, parents, teachers, and school staff members all have a right to expect a safe and secure school environment.

Teachers' Risk of Lawsuits

Many teachers are not concerned about lawsuits because they reason that any civil suit will be placed against the school district, the school board, the superintendent, or an individual administrator. These teachers feel that someone with money will be sued. But this is not the way it always works. The issue is quite complex and is rarely simple. You may well be liable or partially liable for following orders, carrying out a defective policy mandated by your board, or doing what you think is best during an emergency. You could easily become "caught up" in extensive litigation.

You *should* be concerned about lawsuits. Both as an individual teacher and as a member of your school system, *you have something to lose*. Certainly you want to avoid personal errors that could be considered unlawful or to avoid the degree of negligence considered to be unlawful. But you should also insist that your school system is in reasonable compliance with good security policy and procedure.

Although you may not have the responsibility of administering the resources of your district, you, as a teacher, will be the first to feel the economic impact of any lawsuit. District monies will be spent on lawyers, not teaching resources. A school system encumbered

with a lawsuit or a law judgment will be very restrictive in terms of cost-of-living and merit salary increases. No matter whether the lawsuit is won or lost, you too, will be a victim. If there are major security problems at your school, the time to deal with them is *now*, not after or during a lawsuit. Lawsuit avoidance, like security, is also your responsibility.

Teachers' Right to Pursue Litigation

You may believe that lawsuits are so expensive that you can't afford to ever become involved in one. But still you should investigate the matter fully. You might not need to pay a retainer. If you have a good case, you might discover that your lawyer will work on a contingency fee. He gets paid a percentage if he wins your case. If he loses, he gets paid nothing. Also, if there is a continuing problem in your district, you might find that your employee representative organization is willing to contribute financially, in order to solve these problems or to send a political message to the district offices.

If I were suing a school board, superintendent, or principal, I would also sue each member "as an individual." This could necessitate each separate defendant employing private council. The board's interest could come in conflict with that of its individual members.

I would also sue them as individuals to "divide and conquer." Some of these policymakers and administrators probably disapproved of many of the security decisions. Some board members probably wanted to solve the security problems but were voted down by others who were more concerned with budgets and the cost of appropriate protection.

If I can get individual administrators or board members to certify their consistent support of security concerns, I can then demonstrate that there were major security problems in the school, through the sworn testimony of board members or principals. When this occurs, I can then prove my case. Usually any codefendant who cooperates by telling the truth is released from the lawsuit as an individual when he or she cooperates.

One example of successful litigation involved the New York City School Board:

> A female school psychologist was raped and sodomized in a school annex building. The jury awarded her $1,075,000 in damages. The award was upheld on appeal. The court found that the evidence was sufficient to show that the plaintiff (victim) had reasonably relied on the defendant's (school administration's) assurances of adequate security measures. Such reliance was sufficient to establish the existence of a "special duty" on the part of the defendants to protect the plaintiff. (*Security Legal Update,* 1992, p. 10).

Teachers, if you have been victimized, get your lawyer to review *Carol A. v. City of New York*, 565, N.Y.S. 2d 169 (A.D.). Also, if you haven't been giving priority to safety in your collective bargaining sessions, let your local know of your concerns. Bring up safety issues at the first faculty meeting held each year and attempt to discuss at least one security issue during each subsequent meeting. If your principal, superintendent, or board is patronizing or condescending about security matters—when you know there is a lot of violence at your school—make sure you record their comments. You may need these remarks for future reference in a lawsuit.

Liability can be incurred by many forms of negligence. Universities, colleges, and community colleges have recently been bombarded with security lawsuits. The colleges' approach to crime control was often inadequate, too. They too often believed in underreporting and camouflaging. They are now paying out millions of dollars for their past conduct. These monies are being given to victims instead of in salary raises, teaching resources, or new buildings.

Michael Smith is a lawyer and a criminologist. He and his wife coauthored the book *Wide Awake: A Guide to Safe Campus Living in the 90s.* In a journal article called "Vexatious Victims of Campus Crime," Smith reviewed several cases. The following cases are examples of successful civil lawsuits against public and private colleges and universities, which could reasonably be applied to other educational institutions:

1. *Peterson v. San Francisco Community College District*, 685 p.2d 1193, 205 Cal. Rprt 842, 36 Cal.3d 799 (1984). This lawsuit was over untrimmed foliage. A rapist hid in the foliage and a student was raped. In awarding a large sum of money to the plaintiffs, the court said that the university knew of the condition and failed to take reasonable protective measures.

2. *Mullins v. Pine Manor College*, 389 Mass. 47, 449 N.E.2d 331 (1983). In this rape trauma damage lawsuit, there were issues relating to the ease of opening locked doors, inadequate fencing, and lack of security officer supervision. The court limited the financial penalty against the college because of liability limits against charitable nonprofit institutions, but allowed an award of $175,000 against the college's vice president for operation, who was responsible for overseeing the security operations.

3. *Miller v. State of New York*, 62 N.Y. 2d 506, 478 N.Y.S.2d 829, 467 N.E.2d 493 (1984). This lawsuit referenced a 6 a.m. rape of a 19-year-old girl. Her dormitory was never locked. Students had complained to the administration, but no locking procedure changes occurred. The court maintained that the premises must be kept in a reasonably safe condition. This included a duty to maintain minimum security measures against foreseeable dangers. Failure to lock the doors breached that duty, the court ruled. A $400,000 award to the student was upheld on appeal.

4. *Eiseman v. State of New York*, 70 N.Y.2d 175, 518 N.Y.S.2d 608, 511 N.E.2d 1128 (1987). This case referenced the duty of a school to screen students and employees. In this case the school provided opportunities for disadvantaged persons. Some of these were ex-convicts. One parolee went on a bloody spree of murder and rape, killing two students and maiming another. The trial jury awarded $360,000 to the family of one of the slain students.

All of these same circumstances exist in many of our public and private schools. We must deal with foreseeable risks, cut back concealing shrubbery, replace inadequate locks, repair or replace inadequate fences, and rewrite inappropriate policies. Many of our public schools are at strong liability risk today. There are also personnel risks and a liability associated with these risks. Does your school have a pre-employment investigative process? If not, then the recently transferred science or humanities teacher could be a

rapist or a child molester. The recent in-town transfer of a young student could represent a disciplinary transfer because of his or her violence. Your janitor or floor-maid may be a thief.

All of these problems are foreseeable. An adequate pre-employment screen could minimize these risks. An inadequate pre-employment screen or the absence of any form of pre-employment inquiry creates a strong liability.

The U.S. Congress was angered over the laissez-faire security approach of contemporary colleges. In response, our congressional representatives passed the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990. It is sometimes called the Student Right-to-Know Act. All colleges and universities receiving any type of federal financial aid are now required to publish their campus crime statistics.

If every school (K-12) receiving federal dollars for school lunch programs, titled programs, special programs, and counseling centers were also placed under this obligation, underreporting and campus crime camouflaging would become a thing of the past. I believe that all schools will be covered under this act in the near future.

In the meantime, we should learn from the mistakes of colleges and universities. How were they successfully sued? What were the circumstances? According to Michael Smith, the student victim suits can be lumped into four general types of claimed duty. These are the following:

1. Warn (students and faculty) about known risks.
2. Provide adequate security protection.
3. Screen other students and employees for dangers.
4. Control student conduct. (1993, p. 5)

According to James Rapp, Frank Carrington, and George Nicholson, authors of *School Crime and Violence: Victim's Rights*, the courts expect schools to provide reasonable care, due diligence, and a physical environment harmonious to the care, custody, and control of students' behavior.

The developing right to safe schools includes these rights of students, teachers, and staff:

- To be protected against foreseeable criminal activity.
- To be protected against student crime or violence that can be prevented by adequate supervision.
- To be protected against identifiable dangerous students.
- To be protected from dangerous individuals negligently admitted to school.
- To be protected from dangerous individuals negligently placed in school.
- To be protected from school administrators, teachers, and staff negligently selected, retained, or trained. (NSSC, 1990, p. 6)

The Right Thing to Do

Many school districts protect their schools for the wrong reason. The fear of liability is an acceptable reason, but it should not be the priority. The preeminent reason should revolve around the safety and well-being of the children and teachers assigned to the schools.

We should protect schools for these reasons:

1. It is the right thing to do.
2. We have a responsibility to the children and teachers assigned to the schools.
3. We want a safe environment for ourselves. Unsafe schools place teachers at higher risk.
4. The school system is liable for actual and punitive damages in a court of law.
5. It is the right thing to do.

I am a security professional. In this capacity I often review criminal attacks for trial lawyers and the clients they represent. I have represented clients in multimillion dollar lawsuits against grocery store chains, franchised hotels, and shopping malls. Many of these businesses felt immunized by their insurance coverage but discovered to their dismay that lawsuits are often for much more than the insured amounts.

Many public agencies also feel immune from security liability lawsuits. I feel that this is a mistake. If you have a foreseeable safety or security problem, you should deal with it or face the risk of a lawsuit. Schools are no exception. To ignore the problems of drugs, gangs, violence, and disorder is to incur a substantial civil liability.

We should develop quality security approaches because it is the right thing to do. Schools should become safe havens again. Schools have a responsibility to protect the students and teachers, and schools have a liability when they don't. As teachers, we also have a responsibility to each other to protect ourselves, our peers, the staff, and auxiliary service personnel, as well as our students. If one of us is unsafe, then perhaps none of us are safe.

Avoiding Your Own Victimization

More teaching professionals and school administrators are injured when breaking up fights than in any other situation. To protect yourself from harm, even in the stress of a volatile situation, you must learn to minimize your own risk. You must learn what to do. More important, you must also learn what not to do. You must learn what to avoid.

Many teachers are spontaneous. A fight erupts, so they step in immediately. They want to stop the fight and separate the youthful antagonists before any injuries occur. Maybe this was the appropriate reaction some 20, 15, or even 10 years ago. With all the weapons available to children today, however, you should not react so quickly.

You must observe the antagonists and the onlookers. It would be a serious error to intervene just as a gang member passes a club, knife, or a pistol into the melee. Take the time to analyze the fight. Look at who is fighting. Tell the observers to move back.

Peter D. Blauvelt, chief of security services for Prince Georges County, Maryland, wrote an excellent school security manual for the National Association of Secondary School Principals. He recommended the following procedure in breaking up fights:

- Walk, don't run, to the fight.
- The moment you come in sight of the altercation, use your best cafeteria voice and let the world know you are coming and you want this nonsense stopped immediately.
- If possible, while walking to the fight, stop at various classrooms and obtain help from other teachers; make sure someone is sent to the office for additional help.
- Call out to any of the students you recognize and start giving orders: "Mary, go to Mr. Frank's room. Sam, you go to the office and get Mr. Jones. Calvin, go to your locker and get me your science book." It doesn't matter what you tell the kids to do. Just remember kids are accustomed to responding to directions, so give them directions. You want them away from the commotion.
- If you know the fighters by name, call out each of their names and let them know you know who they are. This could even be the time for a little humor. If you can get some of the kids laughing, it will ease their tension.
- If you are confronted with a real donnybrook of a fight, get additional help. Don't try to be a hero. (1981, p. 16)

First, you need to control your own emotions. If you sense that something is wrong, then it probably is. Don't try to suppress your sixth-sense with logic—listen to it.

Then, you should try to relax. Psychologists have estimated that 55% of all communication is nonverbal, that 38% is vocal (tone of voice and the word choices expressed), and only 7% is verbal. Nonverbal communication is particularly important during a potentially violent encounter because it is the first, and often the only, form of communication available. Acceptable nonverbal communication is known as *congruence* (Hoad, 1993).

A teacher who learns congruence is likely to have the skills appropriate to de-escalating violence and bringing situations under control. Congruence training, in this context, is learning how to "physically" empathize with an aggressor or a potential aggressor. Congruence recognizes that body posture, the position of the shoulders, the position of the feet, facial expressions, hand and arm movement, and tone of voice may be used to influence others in a positive way.

Congruence training also recognizes the psychological body "buffer zone." A comfortable distance in a standing position is at least a full arm length away. Tension can be de-emphasized by backing off at least 5 or 6 feet. You can de-escalate even more tension by getting the person to sit down.

Stare-downs and putting your face within inches of an aggressor is almost always considered an aggressive challenge. Aggressive words are inappropriate during events of this type. You should also eliminate anger from your voice during these confrontations. This is not to say that you should not be assertive. Assertiveness is appropriate; aggression is not. You should also be careful to observe the escalation of tension during a confrontation. Sometimes it is best to back down, submit, or even apologize. "I am sorry, Joe. I see how much this meant to you. Why don't you come on over to my room during your next break and we will talk about it." Backing down, apologizing, or submitting may become the only key to surviving some situations. Adult teachers should submit if submission will de-escalate a violent event.

Some male teachers believe that if they ever back down, then the students will stop respecting them. None of us would prefer to lose face, or back down, but in a violent confrontation we must use our training to reestablish control. We must reestablish control even if we lose face.

Focus on the feelings of the aggressors, their behavior and emotions, rather than the right or wrong of the argument. You can work these problems out later. In the confrontation stage you need to de-escalate the tension. I personally have backed down as a police officer and have had onlookers thank me later.

Controlling your own emotions, words, and body posture, controlling the event, and de-escalating tension are keys to safety at school. These factors are significant survival methods. Bob Nations, in his *Comprehensive Crisis Management Planning Manual*, recommends that whether you are approaching a fighter, a gang member, or someone under the influence of drugs, you should do the following:

- Use caution in approaching the individual.
- Do not, through body language or verbal communication, impose a threat to the individual.

- Be firm, but calm and reassuring.
- Once you have the situation under control, do not leave alone with the individual student.
- Visually, without touching the individual, check for weapons. Do you see bulges in clothing, belts, headbands, or book sacks? (1993, p. 10)

Edward Muir, who works on school security issues for the United Federation of Teachers, has discovered that many teachers are now afraid of their students.

> We counsel them, do not do to a student what you would not do to any strange kid you ran across on the street. . . . Do not put your hands on them. Do not invade their airspace. Do not close off escape routes. (1989, p. 28)

Victim Profiles

Did you know that some people are more likely to become crime victims than others? Research indicates, for instance, that younger and less experienced teachers are more likely to be attacked or robbed than older colleagues (NSSC, 1987). Criminologists have also established a "victimization prone" category similar to those "accident prone" categories established by insurance companies some years ago. Some people are victimized again and again. Some people are never victimized. Interpersonal skills and the ability to form relationships with others will decrease your crime victimization probability.

Teachers who are well-liked are much less likely to become victims than teachers who are disliked. Become involved in extracurricular activities that will enhance your popularity. Work on your in-class teaching skills. Are there any negative areas that need improvement? Also work on memory and recollection. The ability to recall names and remember faces will decrease the chances of your becoming victimized and increase your popularity. The skills most useful in avoiding criminal victimization, however, are these:

- Being observant.
- Avoiding excessive risks.

- Wearing light-colored clothing.
- Interpreting what you see—in a crime prevention approach.

Probably 90% of all crimes can be deterred. True *crime prevention* implies a change of heart. It is like a religious experience in which someone turns away from a criminal lifestyle and accepts the mores and values of the middle-class society. *Crime deterrence* simply stops a crime from occurring today or at a particular location or time. A good deterrence example is the police officer standing beside the vendor whose goods are to be stolen. Delinquents are very unlikely to steal while the officer is there. Deterrence does not imply a change of value system or of "heart."

To avoid any crime, the teacher should be prepared to avoid all crime. Probably the most fundamental crime deterrence precept is to avoid the ostentatious. Never show that you are wealthy or that you have access to wealth. Now some school teachers may laugh at this statement. Wealth? A teacher? But the teacher may be the wealthiest person a truly poor student knows.

Sometimes crime prevention means that you do not dress as stylishly as you would prefer. Insure that you do not become a "good" or a "preferred" victim. Preferred victims wear expensive watches and jewelry. Preferred victims carry more cash than they need instead of credit cards. Observers can see the cash at grocery stores, pharmacies, or deli checkouts.

Be careful about your colors as well. You are less likely to be attacked when you are wearing lighter colors. Tan, light brown, and light blue are preferable to navy blue or black. Dark colors and bright colors like reds and purples "invite" attack and attract violence. Years ago psychologists began to wonder why deputy sheriffs, who usually wore tan uniforms, were less often attacked or resisted than police officers in navy blue or black. Because the deputies didn't have close backup, it would logically be concluded that they would be attacked more often. During the time period of the survey, it was discovered that deputies usually had less training than the police officers; so this, too, was not the variable. The colors were the variable. Police officers wore dark colors; deputies wore lighter shades.

"Good" victims are helpless, frightened, and confused. They are weak and unlikely to defend themselves. Teachers can gain control by being observant and by focusing attention on their environment. Increase your ability to move defensively. When you leave school, avoid carrying large stacks of test papers or homework in your arms. Restrict the take-home work to an amount easily carried. Carrying too much broadcasts physical vulnerability.

Remember to accept responsibility for your own safety. Develop a security- and safety-oriented lifestyle. Read the crime reports in your local newspapers. Talk to the school security personnel and to the local police. Listen and react to what they recommend. Never become apathetic to crime at your school or to crime in your neighborhood.

You can make a difference at your school, if only by avoiding becoming a victim yourself. Obey the rules of crime prevention, crime avoidance, and crime deterrence. Staying within the view of others is a strong deterrence program for any type of crime. Staying near other people is the simplest and most effective crime avoidance strategy you can take. Create a crime-free zone by joining with your colleagues in an anti-crime effort. Let crime prevention become a lifestyle, a habit, and a protector.

Design Your Own Personal Security Program

Personal security is nothing more than adopting a safer lifestyle. Actually, teachers have trained students in these techniques all of their careers. When the last bell rings in the afternoon, what do you tell small children as they leave the school grounds? You tell them to watch, look, and listen! Accept your own advice. Do the same thing, and the probability that you will be victimized at school will be significantly decreased.

Learn to look both ways on a one-way street. Is this paranoid activity? Absolutely not. It is a simple recognition that people make mistakes and turn the wrong way on one-way thoroughfares. It is a recognition that drivers drive while intoxicated and when they are high on drugs. Looking both ways, all the time, is the first step in accepting a personal protection program.

Personal security is the simple act of accepting responsibility for your own safety. You accept personal responsibility and you never delegate this responsibility to others. Never expect a police or security unit to help. Accept total responsibility for your own safety. Personal security is the simple act of protecting yourself from physical harm.

Learn how to avoid specific threats. Practice the automatic reactions learned throughout your lifetime. You turn your car away from a collision. You run from overwhelming force. You call 911 when you see a threat in your neighborhood. You practice personal security every day. Personal security protects you from harm. In his book *Living in Troubled Lands,* Patrick Collins wrote that personal security is

> the thoughtful, realistic and religiously practiced method by which you attempt to protect yourself from harm. It is the accumulation of all the actions you take, all the defenses you build, and all the methods you employ to maintain your personal security. (1983, p. 13)

Everyone has a personal security program. Locking your car when you leave it parked and relocking it when you are driving so you won't be easily hijacked are two essential elements of a personal security program. Locking your house door is another. Having a barking dog is another component to a comprehensive personal security program. There are many things that you can do at school to enhance your security. Learn to apply observation skills. Interpret what you see. Accept the facts. The facts are that our world and our way of life is increasingly dangerous. Develop your own comprehensive personal security program.

The Four Stages of Every Crime

The first stage is *surveillance.* Criminals watch their victims and carefully survey the location. Is this a good spot to commit a crime? Will this person be a good victim? A "good" victim is one who lets

the criminal get what he or she wants. A good victim probably can't identify the perpetrator in a police lineup or in court, because the victim was not observant. A good victim is not wary. A good victim is not vigilant. A good victim is preoccupied, listens to a stereo headset, or reads a book. A good victim never sees or "feels" the surveillance and never sees the criminal approaching.

Because surveillance is the most integral of all four steps, you should always listen to your own feelings. If something doesn't feel right—it probably isn't. Go somewhere else. Get away quickly. Get some help. Alert others. Someone may be surveilling you.

Simply becoming observant and wary can deter crime. By walking your school or school yard in a vigilant pose, you can avoid victimization. Because over two thirds of all crimes against children and adults occur when the victim is alone and/or isolated from public view, you are at least twice as safe when you are with another person. Staying near areas with other teachers, staff, or students will help significantly. Staying away from isolated locations will also substantially decrease your risk.

The second stage is called *invitation*. The invitation phase of victimization is avoided completely if you spotted the surveillance and reacted to it. The invitation is usually innocuous—it merely slows you down or stops you in a vulnerable zone. Examples of "invitations" are as follows:

- "May I get change for the parking meter from you, please?"
- "Do you know where the I. R. A. Sucker Class is located?"
- "Do you have a match?"
- "Can I get a dollar for some lunch? I am hungry."

Another example is a simple blocking effort by cooperating criminals. You are "invited" to stop. But if you don't provide change, directions, or matches; if you never even slow down; if you act as if you never even heard the request; you are less likely to be victimized. Stopping increases your risk. Even slowing down is risky. Without slowing down, state, "I am sorry, but I am not good at directions," or "I don't have any change." But never risk an attack or robbery by trying to be friendly or helpful.

By failing to stop, failing to render help, failing to provide money, and failing to give directions, the potential victim avoids the trap. The attacker is prepared to confront and attack when you act as they predicted you would. When you do not act as they predicted, it throws them off stride. It breaks their concentration. They will probably abort their plans. You break their criminal event synchronization, thereby cutting off the operation.

The third stage is called *confrontation*. Actually, all four stages may run together, simultaneously, or be accomplished within seconds of each other. The confrontation is one step closer to the attack. It is here that the request for assistance turns into a demand: "Give me your wallet." "I will take your watch now." "Give me your diamond ring, or I will cut your finger off to get it!" Even during the confrontation, you may be able to yell, scream, jump, or run away.

The fourth stage is called *attack*. The attack is dangerous. During this stage weapons will probably be drawn, and profane threats of bodily harm are likely to be delivered. You may be compromised by this time. If you can't get away, you probably should remain passive and comply with your attackers demands. If weapons are in evidence, it will be extremely dangerous to engage in an all-out resistance at this stage.

The teacher should never cease being vigilant. There is no such thing as a safe school. Some schools may be relatively safe. Others may be reasonably safe. But no school is absolutely safe. Late in the afternoon, far away from the central office, a school hallway or room may be an incredibly dangerous location.

Even a crowded school may be dangerous. The sounds coming from a basketball game in your gymnasium could easily cover the screams of a rape victim or mask the sound of a shooting. So, even when the school has plenty of people there, you should not casually assume that you are safe. Stay alert and stay alive. Stay with the crowd. Don't go back and get something you left on your desk. Use your powers of discernment to avoid the trauma of becoming a crime victim. Remember that your safety and your security are your responsibility.

You Are Not Safe Until You Are Home

Where do you park your car? In many inner-city areas, there are very few parking places. Teachers all lived in the neighborhood a few years ago. There wasn't any need for faculty parking lots. Teachers walked to work. Because many teachers now park away from the school, they must be very careful en route to their vehicle.

Remember the steps required in crime prevention. Watch for surveillance, be wary of an invitation. Stay alert. Remember that traveling with another teacher or even walking with your students is an advantage. Keep your keys in your hand. The keys can be a weapon. Approach your car with the key extended. As soon as you get in, relock the car. By having your key in your hand, you will not be distracted by looking for it in your pocket, purse, or briefcase.

If you are alert, you will see a threat coming. You can run, yell, hide, climb a telephone pole, jump on top of a car, or crawl under a small one. Even an attacker with a knife will have difficulty getting to you as you move, kick, and scream from under a car or truck. Yelling for help may be an advantage. Delinquents, or adult criminals, are wary. They do not want to be identified and they do not want to be arrested. Noise increases this likelihood.

Use space and distance to your advantage. Let this be a normal, planned, crime-prevention response. Train yourself to become aware of all the activities going on around you. If you daydream, fantasize, or concentrate on some problem, you may not be vigilant the day you need this skill. People who act distracted send out subliminal messages to delinquents and criminals. "Here I am, I'll be a good victim." Reading books, listening to a headphone set, sifting through a purse or an attaché, and looking at the scenery may be sufficiently distracting to enable a criminal attack.

But if you are observant, you will see that a street gang is approaching. You will see that you are about to enter the "invitation stage" of a criminal event. If you have been vigilant, you can walk to the doorway of a store or business, hail a taxi, or run. Some victims step into the street and run against the flow of traffic. Even on

a busy street, this risk is preferred over the threat of a criminal attack such as assault, robbery, rape, or abduction.

You should also listen to your feelings. If you are suddenly frightened or if somebody gives you the creeps, listen to your feelings! Leave the area immediately. Do not ignore these intuitive feelings. Intuition, a sixth sense, or your Guardian Angel may be telling you to avoid risk. Do not ignore these feelings. Intuition can be a powerful crime-avoidance tool. Do not allow yourself to use logic. Don't talk yourself out of occasional concerns for your security.

Target Hardening

Crime avoidance and crime deterrence are often called *target hardening* in the security profession. A "soft" target is an easy target. A "hard" target is more difficult to attack. An observant, wary adult is a difficult target. The observant target is likely to identify the perpetrator of a crime in a police lineup. The observant target is more likely to get away or to resist.

Criminals, delinquents, and gangs want to be successful. They are like business professionals, except they are crooks. Delinquents want a low risk and a high return for their criminal activity (investment). Although target hardening will not cause a change of heart on the part of a delinquent, it can prevent your victimization. It will significantly decrease the likelihood that you will be victimized. Target hardening can protect you from crime.

An erratic schedule is one target-hardening method. Assume that the meanest delinquent in your school decides that he wants to harm you. What is the easiest way he can do this? Well, he could attack you at school—but you are likely to receive assistance there. He might be more successful if he attacks you en route to or from school or en route to or from your car. To plan his attack, he has to place you under surveillance.

"Mr. Smith always parks his car on 5th Street. I watched him carefully. He always parks his car between 7:25 and 7:30 in the morning. He always leaves school between 4:40 and 4:45 in the afternoon. You can set your watch by Mr. Smith." Smith's schedule

has rendered him a soft target. Because he always parks over on 5th Street, he probably enters and exits from a particular doorway each day. He can be surveilled easily this way. However, because Mr. Smith has been threatened, he should change his schedule and discover alternative parking places in other locations. Perhaps other teachers will "trade out" with him if he leases his parking space. He also should change the times he arrives and leaves.

Imagine your little criminal waiting for you—and waiting—and waiting. But you went out another doorway this day—and you left an hour early or an hour late. Perhaps you even arranged for a school security officer to walk you to your car, or you called the local police department and had them cruise the area until you safely exited. There are always alternatives. You don't have to accept victimization on the delinquent's terms. Show your attacker that he underestimated his target. You aren't going to be an easy target.

Crime avoidance should become a way of life. It is based on certain skills, the most important of which is continuing observation. Keep up with the crime trends in your neighborhood. When you know how the crime occurs, when it occurs, and how it occurs, you have several more weapons in your crime avoidance toolkit.

Becoming a Successful Victim

Americans are inundated with crime-related information. We hear about crimes on TV and in the news. We almost become immune to the knowledge of crime. Crime is like a disease. It is always there! We hear about it so much that we may believe that there is really nothing that we can do about it. In spite of harsh local statistics, we think crime happens to someone else.

Many Americans believe that law enforcement and crime prevention is police business. It is the police department's responsibility to stop your crime. When I was a young state trooper, I discovered that I was *always* the guy that got there too late. It was my job to investigate crimes after they had happened. I was also charged with the responsibility of arresting the perpetrators.

When I entered the private security profession, I found that I was not the "guy that always got there too late." I could help prevent crime. It is unrealistic, naive, and irresponsible for an individual to believe that police officers or school security officers will be available to intervene when you need them.

Never let your guard down. Never let a stranger or an intruder at your school get close enough to compromise your security. If you must walk through dangerous areas either at school or near the school—walk with others. Do not walk through dangerous

areas alone. And if you must walk these areas, please be especially careful and attentive. Mentally prepare yourself for an attack.

Being prepared can save your life. You have already planned what you are going to do. You are ready to react. You are ready to respond. Failing to prepare will be especially costly. Preparation is more than just a state of mind; it is a statement of the ability to respond. You will substantially increase your own safety by such preparation.

The best defense against any crime includes observational skills and vigilance. Be aware of your surroundings. See. Observe. Interpret what you see. "See" with your mind and not just your eyes. An informed observer sees more than an uninformed observer. A passerby may see a pretty flower. A botanist may see a rare specimen. In the same way, crime avoidance specialists see locations that are more dangerous than others.

A woman walking alone should "see" a group of gang members walking toward her. She should see the group separate with one member heading her off from the front, one cutting off escape from behind, and one heading directly to her for a confrontation. Now is the time to escape. At the confrontational stage, it may be too late. Three young men can certainly control her. She is just about to experience serious trouble. But if she is alert, she has many alternatives. She can seek sanctuary in a local home, business, or office. She can hail a taxi. She can run! She can get in the street and run against the flow of traffic. She would never have any other option if she had not been attentive. If she had been distracted, she would have become a crime statistic.

Rape Avoidance

Rape is the most violent, frightening, and serious of all crimes against women. It is the dirtiest four-letter word in the English language. Other words may be applied to this terrible act, but only RAPE indicates that the world's most personal crime has been committed.

The feeling that you are safe from rape because you are a schoolteacher, because you are "not a certain type of woman," or because

you don't "live in a certain type of neighborhood" is a myth. The tragedy of rape will forever shatter that illusion. A rapist is just like a burglar looking for the right location and the easiest victim. He is willing to attack any available victim.

Rape affects all women without regard to age, race, or marital status, although members of some status categories tend to be raped more often than members of other categories. The research data available suggests that virtually all women and girls are at risk of being raped. However, women have been avoiding rape, deterring rape, and defending against rape since the beginning of civilization. Let us examine the methods used successfully and then use them to avoid the world's fastest-growing crime. An informed woman is less likely to be victimized and traumatized.

An organization known as Alternatives to Fear (ATF) is headquartered in Seattle, Washington. This group teaches women to physically defend themselves. However, it is their philosophy that makes the group unique. ATF's concept of primary rape prevention includes the following assumptions:

1. Exhaustive, reliable information is crucial in addressing any issue: Knowledge reduces fear and dependence, increases power and control.
2. No person is defenseless. Everyone has an arsenal of skills, strengths, and abilities at his or her disposal.
3. A person's arsenal of self-defense methods includes psychological as well as physical abilities.
4. Although no victim is completely powerless, neither is any offender all-powerful.
5. Although all efforts at self-defense will not be successful, many can be. (Koss & Harvey, 1987, p. 146)

Rape is an avoidable crime. Although all women are potential victims, most rape victims are between 10 and 19 years of age. Schoolteachers are already older than the primary age of victimization, but that does not free teachers from the threat of this crime. Divorcees and women separated from their husbands are 6 times more likely to be raped, 5 times as likely to be assaulted, and 60%

more likely to suffer the personal crime of theft (Bowker, 1981, pp. 164-175).

Rape victims are usually smaller than other women. Taller or larger women are also more likely to successfully avoid this crime. Rapists are cowards. Women of any size who are observant and street smart can avoid this act. But don't think it can't happen to you. Anyone who takes a laissez-faire approach to her own security is a likely candidate.

More than one fourth of all rapes occur during the daytime, but nearly one half of all offenses occur between 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. Rapes are also more likely to occur on weekends than on weekdays. Only 20% of all rapes occur between races; 80% of all rapists are of the same race as their victims.

Many women seem to believe that rape is a crime that "won't happen to me." Because it isn't going to happen, they take fewer precautions. They delegate their safety to the police, to the school security officers, to their principal, or to other (male) teachers. Security is not a function anyone can or should delegate to another. As a police officer, I investigated several cases where women depended on their own husband or male companion to protect and defend them. Sometimes they tried. However, I worked several rape cases where the "protector" escaped, leaving his own wife or daughter alone.

Don't Appear to Be a "Good" Victim

If you live a crime-avoidance lifestyle, you will not appear to be a "good" victim. Criminologists can now document a victim personality that is visible to street criminals and others who are particularly observant. Although no one ever invites rape, there are obvious behaviors that make rape more convenient to an attacker. Many women are raped several times during their lifetime.

The single most important revelation that leaps off the pages of criminological literature is that being alone is the most significant rape behavioral indicator. When you stay at school after hours, you should stay with other teachers. Don't stay there alone. Don't walk out alone. Don't come back alone.

Many muggings or street robberies also escalate into assault and rape. Street offenders may be initially attracted to a victim by her purse, a watch, a ring, or some other indication of wealth. The crime intensifies and then the perpetrator takes all that is available in terms of criminal benefits. By carrying fewer valuables, you decrease the probability of rape considerably.

The Confrontation Stage of Rape

If you have been vigilant, you have recognized that someone is watching you. You have spotted any criminal surveillance. You have been able to see the "invitation" stage develop before it actually occurs. As such you have avoided it. Sometimes, as in a blitz (fast-as-lightning) attack, all of the stages occur almost simultaneously, but usually there is some time separation between the three events. If you have seen the confrontation evolving, you still have time to scream, run, or try to get away. Have you ever played "King on the Mountain"? Some space is more defensible than other space. The first child up the hill can keep others who are older and larger from gaining access to the top. So can you.

You can act in an unpredictable manner. Outside you can jump on the hood and roof of a car. Inside, you can get on your desk and kick any attacker. Scream at the top of your lungs. Attract a lot of attention.

Many women have been trained to accept some "Rambo-like" philosophy or imagery in terms of reacting to a violent crime. I personally believe that this is inappropriate. The time to avoid rape is before the attack. Once an offender has his hands on you, you probably are already under his total control. Only if alcohol or drugs have influenced the offender is there an exception.

I never recommend all-out resistance because it can be fatal. Slightly less than 1% of all (reported) rape victims are murdered. Although some authorities disagree with my approach, I can demonstrate that resistance in the attack stage increases the likelihood of death and of serious injury.

Rape victims who submit are much less likely to be hospitalized or killed. There is also a reaction known as "passive" resistance. Sometimes passive resistance works. One form of passive resis-

tance is the "talking" approach. You keep up a fast-paced chatter. Ask him if he would want someone to attack his mother or sister. Keep him off balance. Anything you say is a good idea if it serves to distract your attacker for the instant you need to escape. It is a good idea if it lessens the intensity of his assault. Don't allow yourself to be pushed into a remote location while you continue to talk, however. This simply increases your danger. The talking is to be used for your advantage—not his.

Another possibility is to use a distraction. Some women keep 5 to 10 one-dollar bills. If they see an attack coming, they throw the money at the perpetrator and run. Other women simply toss their whole purse in his general direction. At the very least, this provides a distraction. You may be able to get away.

Once a rape assault begins, there may be very little you can do to stop it. If small children are present, the attacker may threaten to harm them unless you submit. One teacher was raped in front of her entire kindergarten class by a man who said that he would kill the children if she did not submit.

Physical force is used in over half of all rapes. Weapons are used in over half of all rapes. This is another reason that your rape avoidance plan should be designed to help you avoid the attack entirely. When you see the threat evolve—before the attack—you can avoid it completely.

Use Your Wits

Some women have successfully avoided a rape by using psychological ploys. The technique may be as simple as in asking the offender not to attack you. "Please do not do this to me." Some victims have prayed that God would spare them this violation—and watched the offender walk away. Some rapists left on learning that their victim was a "good" woman, a mother, or was pregnant. However, if you are confronting a violent, sadistic offender, his arousal would be increased with the same information.

Some victims actually begin a negotiation with the violator. They keep him talking as long as possible. The more the rapist sees the victim as a human being, rather than an object for his gratification, the better the victim's chances for avoiding the rape or surviving

it. As long as you are talking, you are not being assaulted—you are not being raped.

When you are talking or negotiating with an offender you become less of a victim. You become more of a person. He may even respect you. Don't beg or plead, however. Pleading only reinforces his power over you. Speak calmly. Don't cry. When you speak to him, look him in the eye.

Some women use psychological techniques in their verbal responses. Some say they are pregnant, or menstruating, or have a vaginal disorder. Some even claim to be infected with a venereal disease. Many of these women are allowed to leave. The only criterion that should be considered during a potential rape is this: "Anything you say that minimizes injury, or that saves your life, is the right thing to say."

Active Resistance

If you fight your attacker, it should be for the purpose of escape. Actually there *is* little likelihood that you will even have the opportunity to resist. But if you want to resist, go all out! Go crazy! Act like an insane woman! Scream, really scream. Women who have successfully escaped rapists recall becoming furious and acting out their rage by screaming or running.

Screaming is considered to be one of the most effective forms of resistance a woman can use, yet fewer than 40% of all rape victims even say no. They can't! They have been incapacitated by their fears.

The National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice rape survey (U.S. Dept of Justice, 1978) was the largest ever completed in the United States. This study determined that in larger cities, 43% all women offered no resistance at all. In the smaller cities, only 27.1% offered any resistance. Only 10%-12% attempted to run. Only 47% used any form of verbal resistance whatever. Only 12% offered any form of physical resistance. These statistics reflect the concept of "frozen fright." This symbolizes the level of fear these women felt. Their fear incapacitated them. They were frozen into submission by their fear.

What Should You Do?

The decision is yours. You should decide now whether you are going to resist or not. You can always change your mind and become a passive victim if your plan doesn't work. If you choose to fight, however, you must be prepared. It takes will and skill to successfully fight off an attacker. You must be willing to seriously injure or kill your attacker. You must be willing to risk injury yourself. You must have the physical strength, the emotional stamina, and the skill necessary to resist a determined adversary.

Look deep within yourself. Do you have what it takes? Be true to yourself. But never depend on self-defense skills exclusively. The time to avoid or prevent a rape is well before it occurs. And if you decide to be passive, you should know that you will probably feel more guilty for not having resisted. Make your decision as to what you will do. Make your decision now. Plan your reactions after due reflection.

Whatever you do, you should avoid panic. Hysteria is an inappropriate reaction. You may not be in control of your own body in a rape confrontation—but you can be in control of your mind. Hysteria can get you killed. Even screams should not be panic driven—they should be part of a plan. If the rapist says he will stab you if you don't stop screaming, you should be able to stop, if you want to live.

Accept responsibility for your own safety. Use your power of observation. Interpret and discern what you see. Distractions won't abort your security program when you are always alert. When you feel insecure—react to that feeling. When you are in doubt about a situation—avoid it, or alter it. If you are afraid to meet with a particular student or a particular parent, get your principal to come. At the very least, insure that other teachers are near.

Robbery

Robbery is taking something from someone in person. It is accomplished with a weapon or with fists. Larceny and burglary are

surreptitious crimes, but during a robbery you always confront your perpetrator. The victim is always present. The robber is always there as well. To this degree, robbery is unlike any other crime of theft. It is dangerous to be confronted by an assailant wanting money, your car, or some other personal property.

Because the perpetrator is willing to use force to subdue victims, he may be considered among the most dangerous of all offenders. Justice officials rate robbers as among the most dangerous criminals in America because of the number of police officers and victims killed by robbers.

Contrary to popular beliefs, you are less likely to be injured in an armed robbery than you are in an unarmed robbery. This statement seems illogical, yet the unarmed assailant must control and intimidate his victim with actual force to prevent the victim from fleeing or resisting.

Robbery is a young person's crime. Of all arrested robbers, 73% are under 25 years of age. Actually, most robbers are under the age of 19. Many young criminals are professionals. That is the way they make their money, support their extended family, or feed their narcotic habit. They steal every day, not just occasionally as an opportunist or a situational thief would.

More teachers are being robbed at or near school than ever before. You are most likely to be robbed on a Monday or a Friday. But it can happen any time your guard is down. Many muggers operate at bus stops and at transportation depots.

Never appear to be a "good" victim by displaying wealth or apparent wealth. The imitation Rolex, a zircon ring, or gold plate is just as dangerous as the real thing. What the criminal doesn't know can get you robbed or even killed. An expensive watch, chain, or pendant is an advertisement of wealth. It is an indication that a street mugger can steal more from you than he can from others. Don't place yourself in this position. Leave the jewelry at home.

Robbery offenses are much more likely to occur in a poorer section of town. A reverse law exists in criminality. You expect thieves to go where the wealth is—the rich part of town. But this isn't the way it is. Robberies occur where the robber is. If the thief is at school, then that is where he will operate. He (only 8% are females)

steals from those who are convenient to him—often from those who can afford to lose the least.

Control Your Own Emotions

Being confronted by an armed assailant is one of the most unnerving events that can occur to any teacher. It is very important that you maintain your emotional composure. Self-control parallels survival rates.

If you are robbed, the probability is that you will not be injured if you keep your composure. It is the victim who now influences the outcome of the crime. The criminal has already decided to steal. The robber may decide to take other advantages as well. You may not be able to keep your pocketbook, but you can control your own emotions.

More victims are killed during a robbery than in any other criminal event. The danger in a robbery is not just the loss of wealth. The inherent risk in a robbery is severe injury and human life. The robber is always dangerous and often ruthless. Robbery offenders are more likely to use weapons and deadly force than any other violent offender.

What Should You Do?

The time to avoid a robbery is before it occurs. If you are negligent in your observance program, you may be robbed. If you are robbed, the best advice is to stay cool and put up no resistance. Comply with all the robber's demands. Although your probability of being murdered is less than 2 in 1000, you must also remember that over 9% of all murder victims are killed during robberies.

In her book *Security Problems in Modern Society*, Sheryl Strauss states:

> The victim does not want to become so compliant that he aids the robber in taking more from a home, office, or car. Yet, by quickly complying with the robbers demands, through deliberate and non-threatening moves, he insures that the robber need not spend any more time than necessary on the premises. The wise victim remembers that holdup perpetrators are

> nervous and excited. They want to get what they are after and then leave immediately. Even simple verbal resistance can have tragic consequences. [In one instance] the robber took a bank customer's money and demanded the change out of his pockets. As the customer pulled coins out of his pockets, a dime dropped out on the floor. The holdup man ordered the customer to pick it up and hand it over. [In an angry retort] the customer said "pick it up yourself." For his verbal refusal, he was shot and killed. (1980, p. 274)

When you comply you should be careful to control any movements, looks, or comments that might provoke a violent reaction. Some victims have been too slow—they were pistol whipped. Other victims reacted too quickly and their reaction was misjudged as resistance. Resistance of any kind invites assault, injury, or murder.

Very young robbers are probably more dangerous than older, more mature, and more experienced offenders. The very young delinquent often believes that you should respect or even revere him when he has his knife or gun. His ego is inherently involved in the crime. One study of muggers by corrections officer Carmine Casario involved an interview of convicted muggers who had been mugged. In working on his master's thesis, he showed that even muggers do not ordinarily resist when they are mugged. None of the 30 convicted felons he interviewed who had also themselves been mugged had resisted. If you resist while being mugged, you are risking your life (Castleman, 1984).

"Your money or your life" is more than just a trite robbery theatrical. It is a reality. What is important to you today? Is it your money, or is it your life? Some victims just cannot stand the idea of someone taking what is theirs. Many men feel that their masculine image is at risk during a robbery.

Although it is never totally possible to predict the events that may occur during an armed robbery, there are a number of actions the teacher can take to increase the chances that he or she will be a successful victim. Remember, a "successful" victim was already victimized when he or she was attacked. But the successful victim does not go to the hospital or to the morgue. To become successful in your robbery victimology, you should:

1. Do exactly what the robber commands—and do only what he or she commands. If he tells you to put up your hands, then do so. Do not, however, put up your hands unless or until you are instructed to do so. Many robbers do not want you to put up your hands because it increases the visibility of the crime to onlookers.
2. Do not speak unless you are ordered to. Keep your mouth shut. Never argue, debate, or philosophize on what you think about street criminals.
3. Do not do anything you are not ordered to do. Make no suggestions and do not offer aid that might cause additional loss. Make no suggestions that might increase the time the robber stays in your presence or on your premises.
4. If the robber orders you to lie down and stay in that position for a stated period of time—do so. There may be an accomplice ready to aid the primary robber.

More and more teachers ask me about different types of weapons. Mace, canned pepper, knives, and pistols are usually mentioned as possible self-defense weapons. My advice in this regard is based on my experience. Some of these experiences relate to the nonlethal weapons and others to lethal weapons. In terms of lethal weapons, my belief is that the robber's gun or knife is already one too many. You should always assume that your assailant is willing to kill. Any attempted resistance or heroics may hasten your demise.

Insofar as the nonlethal weapons of mace and pepper spray are concerned, I still say no. The manufacturers do not tell the consumer that training is necessary to use these materials properly. I have seen police officers gas themselves, so even cops don't always stay current in their training and retraining programs. Manufacturers also don't tell you that the material has a "chemical shelf-life." Most of the nonlethal weapons of tear gas carried in America today are inert. They are less than useless because you are depending on them for aid and they can't help you. If you carry a stun gun, you may find that your batteries have run down when you need power the most.

The second practical matter insofar as lethal weapons are concerned pertains to the issue of will and skill. You must use the weapon for it to be effectual. The idea of "bluffing" or threatening someone with violence is just not a good idea. When you are saying, "Leave now, or I will shoot," the truth is that you should already be pulling the trigger. And if you shoot, you should shoot to kill.

Using a weapon as a warning tool is incredibly foolhardy and remarkably ineffectual. Most middle-class Americans just do not have the will to pull the trigger. Often police officers freeze up, too. They do not want to kill or injure. If the police often react in this manner, how would you respond? If you are not willing to use your weapon, it may be used against you. The robber could take your gun away from you and kill or injure you.

In terms of skill, police officers often miss their shots during close-range gunfights. The average police battle is at 7 yards. In most gunfights, the officer and his assailant both miss each other at this distance. Often they empty their guns, expending more than 12 shots between them—and still miss. The stress of the fight and the fear of death or injury contribute to the misses.

But remember that American police officers fire hundreds of rounds each year. They stay current in their firearms proficiency. They are required to maintain minimum skill levels, normally firing all day once every 3 months. What would your skill level be under the threat of death, when you only plink at tin cans every year or two? Leave the gun at home. Use your observational and human relations skills to avoid crime.

Larceny

Larceny is a simple theft. It is a serious crime, a felony, when the stolen item or items are valuable. It is a minor crime, a misdemeanor, when the item is worth less. Each state can individually decide the minimum value of stolen goods necessary for a felony. In Mississippi, the larceny theft of an item valued at more than $250 is a felony. If the value of the item is less than $250, the theft is a misdemeanor.

Teachers and students are often the victims of simple theft. The Boston Safe School Commission findings reported that half of their teachers had been victims of school robbery, assault, or larceny. The majority of these incidents were of larceny (Cuervo, Lees, & Racey, 1984).

The best way to lower your risk of theft is to take fewer valuables to school. Take an inexpensive watch. Leave good jewelry and expensive-looking costume jewelry at home. If it looks good—somebody is bound to want it. If you look prosperous—you are creating a higher risk level.

There are many other professional accoutrements: a leather attaché, a leather sport jacket, gold necklaces, expensive pens, a notebook computer, and pocket calculators may all demonstrate wealth or affluence. Each of these items may be something that one of your students might covet sufficiently to steal it. Radios, mini-TVs, desk sets, and other treasures may also be in evidence. If you have these, lock them in your desk when you are not in your room. And then take them home with you. These are high-loss items.

Your wallet, your checkbook, and your credit cards are the items thieves steal most. They especially want cash, so limit the amount of money you take to school. Most male teachers keep their checkbooks and cash in wallets. Women keep their wallets in purses. It is the purse that is often the magnet for thieves.

By minimizing the wealth at school, you are decreasing your chances of victimization. The same is true of your automobile. If your family owns a BMW or a Mercedes and a Ford or Chevy, you should drive the less prestigious car to school. It is less likely to be hijacked or "hot-wired." The less expensive car is less likely to attract criminals.

Emotional Survival

The stress of living and working in a high-risk environment is getting the best of many teachers today. Those especially at risk are teachers who have been victimized by a violent crime. Teachers who have lost valuable items in thefts may also have high stress levels. They continue to feel vulnerable. When the gangs, the drugs, and the ritualistic groups are in your school, there will always be stress.

Cumulative stress is just as detrimental to your health as living through a war, an earthquake, or a hurricane. Natural disasters are over in a short time. However, the victim of cumulative stress discovers that his or her stressors go on and on and on.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental trauma as opposed to a physical one. PTSD victims don't necessarily have broken arms and visible injury, yet they suffer just as much as victims of physical trauma. An altered or damaged psyche is much more difficult to treat than the physical manifestations of injury.

Many mental health professionals have little or no experience in this area. Although much was learned by members of the military during Korea and Vietnam, we are still learning. Stress, burnout, combat fatigue, survivor's shock, and other manifestations of psychological injury are frequently found in American school dis-

tricts. Its victims are the teachers, counselors, and principals who must live and work in almost impossible conditions.

In recent years, Congress provided psychological assistance for victims of catastrophic events. Tornado, hurricane, and forest fire victims may be eligible for federally funded mental-health counseling. Military personnel are likewise treated for psychologically based service disabilities. Why should America's school boards do any less for their trauma victims? In some social, family, or religious groups, a psychological or psychiatric evaluation implies a weakness and a disability. Although this is not an acceptable interpretation, it is true that our society often penalizes the very persons who need assistance the most. School boards are no exception.

PTSD injures the psyche; it injures our appraisal system. It lowers our ability to take or accept additional stress. Your coping resources are impaired. Your perception is impaired. The same stresses you handled successfully for many years are now simply too much for you.

PTSD may be recognized through emotional, cognitive, physiological, and behavioral tendencies. Emotions may swing after the onset of a crisis or of continuing stress over a long period of time. A person may appear to be happy one minute and on the edge of despair the next. In the cognitive area, a victim may no longer be able to make simple decisions. A teacher known for an excellent memory may no longer remember to mail her bills. A teacher who was always meticulous in matters of personal hygiene is no longer interested in brushing her teeth or in bathing. Personal hygiene deteriorates under the effects of cumulative stress or PTSD.

PTSD also affects the physical realm. An overweight person may no longer have an appetite. A person who never had difficulty sleeping now has insomnia. Persons with excellent health now catch colds, flu, and viruses easily. Some of these victims also have anxiety attacks, perhaps even have the symptoms of heart attacks—without the attack.

In the behavioral area, the stressed-out teacher begins to alter lifetime patterns of conformity. Some become workaholics and are overactive. This insures that they never have the time to think about uncomfortable feelings. They repress all negative thoughts. Often the extrovert will withdraw from all social situations. He just

wants to be left alone now. Perhaps the stress has gotten so high that he has difficulty organizing his time, grading papers, turning in lesson plans, or any of the duties he has proficiently performed for years.

Decompression

If you have served in a school where there was a murder, a rape, or a suicide, you probably needed a vacation to heal, to contemplate, or to meditate. If you were at Stockton, California, the day the kids were killed, or if you were in Natchez, Mississippi, when the public kindergarten teacher was raped in front of her students, perhaps you needed a change of pace. Psychologists call this time period *decompression*. All victims need to decompress. And you may be a victim just because you were there, near there, or because you have been under stress for too long.

Los Angeles, New York City, and Chicago all have emotional assistance programs for teachers needing counseling. These same policies need to be instituted all across our land. You may need this assistance yourself at some point in the future. Remember that PTSD is not the victim's fault. Help these victims. Help them obtain the assistance they need. Support your labor units effort to insure this assistance.

Influence the Causes of Stress

The best way to deal with stress is to eliminate the problems causing it. If you can't stop the stress entirely, perhaps you can limit it. This book deals with many of the contemporary approaches successfully applied to crime, disorder, disruption, and violence.

Carefully review the steps appropriate to staying safe at school. Accept these steps. Apply them. Make them part of your daily lifestyle. Maintain a personal protection program. Minimize your risk. Obey the rules.

Speak up and speak out at faculty and teacher association meetings. Let the administration know that there are problems. Don't be intimidated. Report any criminal act that you observe. Don't allow yourself to be intimidated or to be victimized twice—once by the offender and then again by the school administration. Insist on your rights as well.

Build a Support System

Everybody needs somebody. We need companionship. We need assistance. We need friends. We need supportive peer coalitions. Team up with friends for both emotional support and active protection. Remember to use the buddy system. Walking with just one associate can decrease the probability that you will be attacked by 70%-90%.

Use your coalition of peers to multiple advantages. Use them as a support system when you need friendship, guidance, or direction. Use them for encouragement when you need nurturing. Use the group as your "family system away from home." Use them as your extended schoolwatch, even as you work with them in this protection program. Use them and help them even if the administration denies there is a security problem, camouflages the problem, or refuses to take a proactive position.

This group will help you face the stress and strains of normal teaching. They will buffer you when there are extraordinary pressures. Their emotional assistance can help you dissipate the stress by allowing you to ventilate and act out your own frustrations. Their physical presence will let you know that you are not alone. There is help available—right down the hall. Pledge to work with each other and for each other, providing better security for all.

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Staying Safe at School

Chester L. Quarles

This is a book that should never have to be written, yet even a cursory glance at the day's news will prove just how vital the topic really is. Schools are still places where *mostly* good things occur, ***but no school is immune to violence.***

Teachers need to be able to differentiate between possible danger and routine disruption in and out of the classroom. Not only do they need to know what to do, they need to know what *not* to do as well. Understanding the difference is crucial.

Chester L. Quarles is an expert and long-time personal safety consultant to educators throughout the United States, and he offers common-sense advice while prodding you to learn all you can about crime and violence.

His book targets personal safety issues of importance to teachers all over the world. You learn:

- how to analyze your school for security risk
- proven methods for avoiding crime
- what to suggest for improving school safety
- how to avoid becoming a victim
- how to be a survivor

It is unfortunate that *Staying Safe at School* had to be written at all, but any reader who needs to put its wisdom into practice will be grateful that it was written.

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